

U.N. force in Croatia allowed to fight

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The Security Council Friday gave the nearly 14,000 U.N. peacekeepers under fire in Croatia the right to rearm and reorganize their forces to defend themselves. The decision came in a resolution extending the mandate of the force only until March 31, putting pressure on the Serbs and Croats to restore a ceasefire and begin drafting a peace accord. It also puts all the peacekeepers in both Croatia and Bosnia under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, which authorizes the use of force to carry out their mission. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said on Friday that he suspended U.N. humanitarian aid to Bosnia will resume. Dr. Ghali, just back from a trip to Tokyo, told reporters after leaving a Security Council meeting that he has instructed the U.N. High Commissioner of Refugees to resume the aid she suspended Wednesday (see earlier story on page 5).

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Africa to end arms ties with Israel

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) — South Africa is planning to cease military cooperation with Israel to coincide with an opening up of the Arab World, a South African military official was quoted Friday as saying. The close military cooperation which linked South Africa to the Jewish state was the result of its "needs," and with the end of those needs South Africa is moving to end that cooperation, said Telman de Vaal, executive general manager of Armscor, South Africa's arms manufacturing company. The daily Al Hayat said Mr. De Vaal confessed that "there are still a number of contracts being executed with Israel, but these contracts will not be renewed when they end."

U.N. appoints 'rapporteur' on Israeli rights abuses

GENEVA (R) — The United Nations Human Rights Commission strongly condemned Israel for its actions in the occupied Arab territories Friday and appointed for the first time a special investigator to monitor alleged abuses. Despite opposition from the United States, the commission adopted four separate resolutions condemning the Jewish state's policies in the occupied territories. The commission, the U.N.'s main human rights forum, has passed resolutions condemning Israeli policies in the occupied territories every year since 1968 at its annual sessions. But U.N. officials said a stronger Third World contingent on the 53-member body — and anger at Israel's expulsion in December of some 400 Palestinians — allowed member states to push through stronger resolutions this year. One of the resolutions against Israel asks the commission to appoint a "special rapporteur" to investigate violations of international law and the Geneva conventions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Human rights activists said the appointment of a rapporteur would brand Israel as a serious violator of human rights — alongside Iran, Iraq, Burma and the former Yugoslavia — and give the issue a higher visibility.

31 Moroccan prisoners on hunger strike

RABAT (R) — The Moroccan Association of Human Rights (AMDH) said Friday 31 political prisoners had staged hunger strikes, 20 of them for an unlimited period, in protest against worsening detention conditions. Members of Islamic and Marxist opposition groups, the detainees are staging their fasts in jails at Casablanca, Kenitra and Oujda. In the central prison at Kenitra, 10 members of the illegal Islamic Youth fundamentalist group have been on hunger strike since mid-February. Ten Marxists of the outlawed Ila Amam (forward), detained in Oujda are staging a fast of unlimited duration.

Hizbollah's burn Rushdie effigy

BEIRUT (AP) — Hundreds of Shiite Muslim zealots burned an effigy of Salman Rushdie in south Beirut Friday to declare support for Iran's renewal of a death sentence on the British writer. They set fire to an effigy of the author and shouted "Death to Britain, death to Rushdie" as they paraded through Beirut's Bir Al Abed suburb. The effigy was made up of a painted head of Mr. Rushdie on top of a jacket wrapped around a pole, with a sign next to the neck saying in Arabic, "Death to the heretic Rushdie." Men, women and children took part in the demonstration, which was organized by Hizbollah, the militant branch of Iran's fiery fund of Shiite fundamentalism in Lebanon. The protest was led by Hizbollah cleric (See related story on page 2).

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Christopher arrives in Amman

Democracy in Jordan key point for discussions in addition to peace
U.S. envoy says Washington committed to peace efforts, but urges similar position from parties concerned ● Abu Jaber voices hope for success

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Amman Friday for talks with His Majesty King Hussein and other officials on means of reactivating the stalled Arab-Israeli peace process.

In an arrival statement at Maraka military airport, Mr. Christopher reiterated the American commitment to the peace process, saying that Washington "is prepared to be a full partner in the pursuit of peace in the region" provided the other parties share our determination to resume (the peace) negotiations.

The peace talks came to a halt in December when Arab parties boycotted them in protest against Israel's expulsion of about 400 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber said he hoped Mr. Christopher's effort to reenergize the peace process would be successful.

"We look forward to our talks, seeking to advance and accelerate the peace process and ensure its success," Dr. Abu Jaber told reporters at the airport after the arrival of Mr. Christopher.

Dr. Abu Jaber reiterated Jordan's commitment to the peace process with the aim of achieving a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace on the basis of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, but pointed out there are "serious threats" to the process.

"Since Madrid, the tension in the region has subsided with the level of Israeli violence in the occupied territories increasing; the current deportees problem being one symptom," Dr. Abu Jaber said.

Mr. Christopher did not mention the expelled crisis in his arrival statement in Amman but a senior U.S. official was quoted as saying Washington was working to get Israel speed up the process of reviewing the individual cases of the Palestinian evictees.

A compromise proposal made by Israel after the Security Council adopted Resolution 799 calling for the immediate return of the expelled offers to allow the return of 101 of the exiles while the term of banishment for the rest would be cut to one year. In addition, Israel also suggested that it would review the cases of the expelled with a view to possible return earlier than offered.

But the expelled have rejected the offer.

Dr. Abu Jaber said Jordan would listen attentively to Mr. Christopher's assessment of the situation in the region and share with him its views regarding the need to attain a lasting and comprehensive peace that will enhance regional security, democracy and human rights.

Mr. Christopher said the U.S. recognizes the critical role Jordan has played in launching and pushing forward the peace talks, adding that "I am interested in hearing the King's views on what



U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher (left) and Jordanian Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber talk to the press Friday (photo by Youssef 'Al Allam)

Jordan and the U.S. can do to reenergise" them.

During his first visit to the country as U.S. secretary of state, Mr. Christopher will also hold talks with Jordanian officials on bilateral relations and means of enhancing them.

"In particular, I look forward to discussing the King's commitment to democratic values and to broadening political participation; a

commitment that we very much applaud," said Mr. Christopher.

The U.S. secretary arrived in Amman from Cairo on the second leg of a six country tour of the region that will also take him to Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Israel and possibly Lebanon.

In earlier statements, Mr. Christopher sought to lower expectations of his first foreign trip since he took office in January, saying he only aimed at hearing out the views of leaders of the region on means of reactivating the peace talks.

The success of Mr. Christopher's mission will largely depend on whether he will be able to find an acceptable solution to the evictees problem, something upon which the Palestinians have conditioned their decision to return to the peace negotiations.

The Palestinians and other Arab parties have said Israel has to implement Security Council Resolution 799 before the peace talks can be resumed but have indicated willingness to accept a gradual return of the expelled.

Egypt was also reported to have stressed this point in its talks with Mr. Christopher, saying that Israel has to comply with Resolution 799 and offering a compromise proposal on how the resolution can be implemented.

Arafat leaves Amman amid reports of bid for compromise deal

By P.V. Vivekanand with agency dispatches

AMMAN — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat left Amman Friday after talks with His Majesty King Hussein on the Middle East peace process and the Arab options in the crisis sparked by Israel's refusal to abide by a U.N. demand for the immediate repatriation of Palestinians it expelled in December.

Mr. Arafat flew out of Amman for a brief stopover in Cairo and then to Sudan a few hours before U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher was scheduled to arrive here in a bid to revive Arab-Israeli peace talks stalled over the expulsion crisis.

A scheduled Arafat trip to Baghdad to deliver a message from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein failed to materialize. The message was believed to deal with efforts to reconcile Iraq and Egypt and mend the strain in their relations caused by the Gulf crisis.

Informed sources said the message would now be delivered to the Iraqi leader by the Palestinian ambassador in Baghdad, Azzam Al Ahmad. There was no immediate explanation to why Mr. Arafat called off his trip to Iraq.

In comments to the local media, Mr. Arafat, chairman of

the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), said his talks with King Hussein focused on the peace process and the Palestinian viewpoints.

Describing the talks as positive and fruitful, Mr. Arafat said the Palestinian position would be presented to Mr. Christopher by King Hussein.

In public statements, Mr. Arafat and other senior PLO officials have said that the Palestinian delegation would stay away from the peace talks unless Israel implements Security Council Resolution 799 of Dec. 18. The resolution calls on the Jewish state to immediately repatriate the expelled Palestinians.

Israel rejected Resolution 799, but offered a compromise deal under which 101 of the expelled would be allowed to return immediately and the term of exile of the rest would be reduced to nine months.

The Security Council issued a statement early this month accepting the offer as a first step.

Despite public insistence on the immediate implementation of 799, Mr. Arafat and other mainstream leaders of the PLO were reportedly working on a compromise proposal which would enable the expelled to return home in phases in four months.

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Resignation of 2 ministers rocks Amato

ROME (R) — Italy's beleaguered Prime Minister Giuliano Amato suffered a devastating blow Friday when two members of his cabinet resigned. Finance Minister Giovanni Conia quit after persistent slurs over a bank collapse 17 years ago, his ministry said. Health Minister Francesco de Lorenzo, under suspicion in a vote-rigging inquiry, resigned after his father was arrested on corruption charges, a member of his Liberal Party told reporters. Their resignations, just nine days after Justice Minister Claudio Martelli quit under a cloud, amounted to the most serious crisis of Mr. Amato's turbulent eight-month premiership. Hours earlier, he had vowed that his government would not resign and held out the spectre of political chaos if Italy were to be forced into early elections. The resignation of Mr. Conia, 49, a former Christian Democrat prime minister, was the more damaging, its impact amplified by its suddenness. He had long been a favourite target of the opposition and was unpopular in the country because of the chaotic and restless way he introduced a hated property tax last year. While householders fumed in queues to find out how they should pay, he was sunning himself on an Indian Ocean holiday.

Prince Hassan hopes for American fairness in Mideast process

PARIS (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has said that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's current visit to the Middle East would provide the Clinton administration with an opportunity to assess the situation in the region.

Prince Hassan voiced hope that the U.S. administration's evaluation would not lead to favouring Israeli-Syrian talks at the expense of Palestinian-Israeli talks.

Prince Hassan added that Syria had always affirmed to its partners in the peace process its preparedness to work collectively with them.

"Despite this, some people might think that one should act definitely to halt the Syrian power. They are thinking of a new regional power," the Crown Prince said.

In an interview with the French newspaper Le Figaro, Prince Hassan said the U.S. had no standard approach to dealing with countries of the region, noting that Washington does not deal consistently with all states when it comes to such criteria as

the trend to democratisation and human rights.

"We always fall outside the circle," he said.

Answering a question whether Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had committed a major mistake by expelling over 415 Palestinians in December and whether the crisis could obstruct the peace process or whether Mr. Rabin had dealt a clever blow to the process, Prince Hassan said Mr. Rabin worked out a strategy to satisfy the two opponent currents in his coalition — the liberals and the religious current.

Mr. Rabin pleased the liberals by dropping a ban against contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and appealed the religious current by taking an action against the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, he said.

The Crown Prince noted that Jordan was the only country which restructured its national economy according to the requirements of Paris and London clubs of creditors, yet it has not

(Continued on page 5)

1993 make-or-break time for peace — Rabin

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — While rejecting any further "concessions" on the expelled issue, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Friday the next year would be make-or-break time for the peace talks.

"I have no doubt that 1993, perhaps a little into 1994, will be the period in which the negotiations will reach a crossroads... towards advancing the making of peace, or — God forbid, and I believe it won't happen — towards stalemate," Mr. Rabin said.

His comments came as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is visiting the Middle East to try to revive Arab-Israeli peace talks stalled by Israel's expulsion of some 400 Palestinians Dec. 17.

"I don't expect miracles to come out of one visit, and the Americans very wisely are not creating exaggerated hopes," Mr. Rabin told Israeli business leaders in Tel Aviv.

However, speaking to reporters he said: "We all hope that the secretary of state will succeed, if not immediately, then after a few weeks, in bringing about the resumption of the peace negotiations."

Asked if he would make a further "concession" on the evictees to meet the Palestinians' conditions for returning to the talks, Mr. Rabin snapped: "And if tomorrow they will put another condition."

The Palestinians have said they would not return to the talks unless Israel brought back all of the nearly 400 Palestinians remaining to Lebanon after being expelled as alleged Muslim radicals.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said on returning from the United States Friday that U.S. officials had promised not to demand further concessions over the expulsions.

"The United States has prom-

ised not to ask Israel for any additional compromises on the question of the deportees and there will be no pressure on this issue for us to make more compromises from the American administration," Mr. Peres said at the airport.

Earlier this month, Mr. Rabin and Mr. Christopher worked out a compromise under which Israel would return 101 evictees immediately and the rest by the end of the year.

But the Palestinians said that was inadequate since it did not deal with a U.N. Security Council resolution declaring the expulsions illegal and demanding the men's immediate return.

According to news reports published Friday, Mr. Christopher will ask for Israeli humanitarian gestures in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and push for a more generous Israeli offer on autonomy to bring the Palestinians back to the peace talks.

Mr. Rabin plans to free hundreds of Palestinian security prisoners early next week, possibly on Monday, the day of Mr. Christopher's arrival in Israel, said the Davar daily, which is close to Mr. Rabin's Labour Party.

Mr. Rabin's spokesman, Gad Ben Ari, refused comment Friday. But Mr. Christopher's visit coincides with the start of the Holy Month of Ramadan, when Israel traditionally announces a prisoner release.

The Haaretz daily said Mr. Rabin has asked security officials to prepare a list of possible humanitarian gestures in preparation for Mr. Christopher's arrival in Israel.

Among the gestures considered were release of prisoners, returning Palestinians expelled many years ago and easing travel restrictions for Palestinians, the daily said.

Egypt, U.S. pledge to work for resumption of peace talks

CAIRO (Agencies) — The United States and Egypt agreed Friday to work for a speedy resumption to Middle East peace talks suspended for the last two months because of Israel's expulsion on 415 Palestinians.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, on the first day of his first foreign mission, met Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Foreign Minister Amr Musa in a bid to win their support for an early resumption of the talks.

At a brief news conference after the talks, Mr. Christopher did not touch on the issue of the expelled.

He said: "We have today agreed to intensify our joint efforts to reenergise the peace process to encourage the partners to return to the negotiations and to ensure that these negotiations are fruitful and produce results."

"We have also agreed that we would work together to achieve

an early resumption of the next round of talks," he said.

Ahead of the meeting, Egypt and the United States appeared in disagreement over Israel's offer to return 101 expelled immediately and the rest at the end of this year.

It was unclear whether Mr. Christopher succeeded in persuading Egypt to accept the Israeli offer.

"You have here the agreement between the United States and (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Rabin," Mr. Mubarak said.

"We have no new agenda but we are working to implement this resolution (799) fully. It will take some time," Mr. Mubarak said.

U.N. Resolution 799 calls for an immediate return of all the evictees, languishing for the ninth week on a snowy hillside in southern Lebanon.

Mr. Mubarak said he had accepted an invitation from President Bill Clinton to visit

Washington in the first half of April.

"I find it a very good opportunity to exchange views with the president and to see what could be done in the peace process so as to move forward," Mr. Mubarak told the news conference.

"We are very keen for the peace process to continue and the negotiations to start as soon as possible and we discussed also the problem of the deportees and we are working so as to resolve this problem so as not to hinder the negotiations of the peace process," he added.

While Mr. Mubarak pledged to support the U.S. efforts for an early resumption of the peace talks, he also said "it will take some time" for Palestinians to come aboard."

Mr. Mubarak said he had a "very good meeting" with Mr. Christopher and was convinced

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Rantisi tells Christopher not to seek piecemeal solution

MARJ AL ZOHOOR, Lebanon (AP) — The spokesman for the nearly 400 Palestinian expellees stranded in South Lebanon said Friday U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher should not waste time trying to work out a deal to repatriate them piecemeal.

"I ask Mr. Christopher not to lose time. We insist on the implementation of international justice which produced U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 for our immediate and collective return home," said Dr. Abdul Aziz Rantisi, a Gaza physician.

"We'll continue to reject American attempts to circumvent Resolution 799, even if we die here," Dr. Rantisi told reporters at the evictees' tent city between Israeli and Lebanese army lines.

Dr. Rantisi commented on reports that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was considering a compromise: A phased return of the evictees in return for Palestinians rejoining the American-sponsored talks.

"We reject the peace talks altogether, because in the end Palestinian participants in such talks would recognise Israel. This means that Palestinians would personally sign a document which says their land does not belong to

them. We reject this," he said.

However, he reiterated that if Israel "reversed our (expulsion) order and pledged to the U.N. Security Council not to (expel) any Palestinian in the future, we'll have a stand that I will not announce now."

Meanwhile, the evictees installed a satellite telephone in one of their nearly 50 tents and were overheard by reporters talking to their families and relatives in the Israeli occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The evictees did not allow the reporters to enter the tent, which hoisted the telephone's aerial.

A source at the camp, who refused to be named, told reporters all the evictees would be allowed to talk to their families and relatives by telephone throughout Ramadan.

It could not be determined who provided the evictees with the communications equipment, despite efforts by the Lebanese army to prevent all sorts of supplies from reaching their camp since Dec. 22.

Lebanon has refused to accept the evictees, saying it does not want to become a dumping ground for Palestinians expelled by Israel.

Afghan governor killed

KABUL (R) — A prominent Mujahadeen commander who was governor of a northern Afghan province has been killed in a helicopter crash, a government spokesman said Friday.

Giulani Mohammad Aryanpoor, governor of northwestern Badakhshan province, died when his helicopter crashed 25 kilometres from the provincial capital Faisabad Wednesday.

"The cause of the crash is not yet known," Mr. Morad said.

The head of the Badakhshan supreme court and a deputy high court judge also died in the crash.

Mr. Aryanpoor was the second provincial governor killed in Afghanistan this month. Nasrullah Mansoor, governor of eastern Paktia province, was killed along with six bodyguards when a bomb destroyed his car on Feb. 9.

Mr. Mansoor was the most senior Mujahadeen leader to die since the start of the 14-year Afghan war of resistance against the Soviet-installed government.

Mr. Aryanpoor, a former teacher, won fame as a commander of Mujahadeen forces in Badakhshan when a bomb destroyed his car on Feb. 9.

Libya denies building chemical weapons plant

TUNIS (Agencies) — Libya's official news agency JANA denied Friday a U.S. newspaper report that the country was building an underground chemical weapons plant.

"JANA's political commentators deny that the Great Jamahiriya (Libya) has any thought of manufacturing chemical weapons," the agency reported.

The denial fell short of an official statement by the Libyan authorities, who have not reacted to the report in Thursday's New York Times.

The Times said Libya was building an underground chemical weapons plant near Tarhounah, about 65 kilometres west of Tripoli, disguised as a water project. It said the plant would make and store poison gas.

The U.S. State Department also condemned Libya Thursday

for what it said was its active chemical weapons programme. It said Libya was making plans to manufacture chemical weapons but did not confirm the details reported by the New York Times.

The newspaper said Clinton administration officials described the plant as a source of significant concern because Libya last month failed to join more than 100 other nations in signing a U.N. convention banning chemical weapons.

JANA said Libya was "prepared" at the time to sign the convention but added that "it committed itself to an Arab countries' decision to not sign the convention until all the states in the region sign a treaty banning all weapons of mass destruction."

No such collective Arab decision has been reported, although Egypt and Syria insist that Israel's nuclear arms should be included

in a ban of all weapons of mass destruction.

Most Arab states boycotted a meeting in Paris in January to sign the chemical weapons ban. But Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania, Libya's partners in the Arab League and the Arab Maghreb Union, signed.

State Department spokesman Joseph Snyder condemned the alleged Libyan programme and noted that the U.N. Security Council has imposed a mandatory ban on any weapon related exports to Libya. He praised the German government for recent steps it has taken to curb such exports to the Libyans.

"The United States calls on all countries to follow the German example in carefully scrutinising exports of dual use chemicals and equipment that have applications in the field of chemical

weapons," he said.

JANA said the reports of a Libyan chemical weapons plant were a "campaign against it in the international media (and) one of the methods of psychological terrorism the Libyan people confronts with the implementation of the Security Council decision" — a reference to U.N. sanctions imposed on Libya in the Lockerbie affair.

The Security Council imposed sanctions on Tripoli last April after it failed to hand over two suspects indicted in the United States and Britain for the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland.

U.S. officials, asking not to be identified, said the Clinton administration is sticking with the Bush administration's demand that Libya turn over the two suspects.

U.N. worried over N. Somalia

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — The United Nations said Friday it was worried about security in a northern Somali town rocked by clashes between Canadian troops and rioters angry over their tribe's treatment by the contingent.

"We have indications that the security situation in Belet Huen and to the north of Belet Huen is certainly less than secure at this time and a cause of concern. It is deteriorating," said U.N. spokesman in Somalia Farouk Mawlawi.

At a news briefing, he also said two Somali gunmen were killed overnight near the western town of Afgoi by members of the multinational task force sent in December to protect food aid for the starving.

On Wednesday, Belet Huen, 300 kilometres north of the capital Mogadishu, was rocked by some of the worst riots since the deployment of the 33,000-strong force from 23 nations.

More than 300 rioters, mainly from the dominant Jijele tribe there, fought with Canadian troops stationed in the town. The soldiers opened fire, killing one Somali and wounding three.

Mr. Mawlawi indicated that the U.S.-led force could do little immediately to pacify the area as troops were deployed only in the town and not in the north.

Giving more details of Wednesday's violence, he said grenades had been thrown at the offices of the British branch of

the Save the Children charity and the Somali Red Crescent. "We have no immediate reports of casualties," he said.

Colonel Serge Labbe, commander of the Canadian troops in Somalia, said Thursday the protest had been organised by one of the senior warlords in the town to protest against alleged unfair treatment of the Jijele by the contingent.

Col. Labbe said the tribe felt it had not received adequate food aid or fair representation on Canadian-created committees dealing with security and other matters.

Mr. Mawlawi announced that a panel charged with reconciling Somalia's 15 warring factions had been summoned to meet Ismat Kittani, U.N. special envoy for Somalia, for talks in Mogadishu Tuesday.

"There have been some consultations going on... and we are hopeful that the meeting will take place," he said.

The panel was set up after the 15 signed a ceasefire last month to end two years of civil war and anarchy that followed the 1991 ouster by rebels of Somali dictator Mohamed Siad Barre.

It has failed to meet since then after some of the factions accused others of violating the truce.

A sniper wounded an Australian soldier on foot patrol in a market Thursday.

Meanwhile, Marine Colonel Fred Peck announced that nearly

3,000 more American troops are to leave Somalia beginning next week.

U.S.-led forces have faced scattered violence since they arrived Dec. 9 to impose order and ensure that relief shipments reach people stricken by war and famine. Four Americans have died, including two Marines killed by gunfire. None of the other 22 countries in the coalition has suffered a fatality.

No precise figures on Somalis killed are available, but the number is believed to exceed two dozen.

The sniper attack occurred in Baidoa and was the third shooting incident involving Australian forces in two days.

Australian Christopher Bay, 19, was hit in the shoulder as his patrol walked through a market area in the city, 190 kilometres northwest of Mogadishu, military officials said. He was flown to Mogadishu for treatment and released.

Twenty-four hours earlier, Australian soldiers killed one Somali and wounded two others in a firefight. They were the first casualties Australian troops have inflicted since the Vietnam war.

Another Australian patrol also clashed with Somalis on Tuesday, but no casualties were reported.

Col. Peck announced Thursday that almost 3,000 American troops would leave Somalia starting next week, including 2,200 from the U.S. army's Third



A Somali boy plays with a toy gun next to an American soldier who is attaching a cord to a rifle to avoid it from being stolen (AFP photo)

Battalion, 14th Infantry based at Fort Drum in New York and other units.

One withdrawal will include 25 army helicopters and four Marine helicopters and 250 air force personnel, Col. Peck said.

That will reduce the U.S. presence in Somalia to about 15,000 troops and support staff.

More than 14,000 soldiers from other countries are in Somalia as the United Nations prepares to approve a peacekeeping force to

assume control of the coalition from the United States.

"Col. Peck said the U.S. reduction was unconnected to an upcoming Security Council debate on the Somalia mission."

"The remaining combined troop strength of about 30,000 will be more than adequate to accomplish all assigned missions," he said.

American forces in Somalia reached a high of 24,000 on Jan. 26, Col. Peck said, while the total

coalition peaked at 38,381.

General Cevik Bir, the new Turkish commander of U.N. troops in Somalia, will arrive in Mogadishu Monday for talks with U.S. military officials on a handover of the multinational force, a U.N. spokesman said.

Gen. Bir is expected to take charge of up to 25,000 troops by April when most U.S. troops serving in Somalia are likely to have gone home.

Arab-Americans demand end to alleged surveillance

WASHINGTON (AP) — Arab-American groups have demanded an end to what they claim is collaboration between police agencies and U.S. Jewish organisations to spying on their people.

They are also asking the State Department to investigate whether U.S. police data about American citizens of Palestinian ancestry is being provided to the Israeli government.

"We want to turn the corner in this relationship" between American Jews and Arabs, James Zogby, president of the Arab-American Institute, told reporters Thursday. "We need to have a new relationship where we treat each other with mutual respect as two ethnic communities with a difference of opinion... rather than spying on each other."

Mr. Zogby and Khalil E. Jah-

shan, executive director of the National Association of Arab Americans, said their news conference was prompted by recent reports of a cozy working relationship between police and Jewish organisations.

They cited media reports that a former San Francisco police inspector provided secret files on Arab Americans to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith, the Jewish human rights organisation.

San Francisco's "entire Arab community is living in fear, in a panic right now. They literally feel they've been raped by the police department and ADL," Mr. Zogby said.

ADL leaders denied any improprieties.

"We categorically reject any implication that ADL has acted improperly in pursuing its mission

of combatting anti-Semitism, bigotry, extremism, terrorism and anti-Israeli propaganda in America," national chairman Al Salberg and national director Abraham H. Foxman said in a statement.

Spokesman Jess N. Hordes said the ADL "on an ongoing basis has treated Arab-Americans with dignity."

He cited the concern his group about official methods used to screen Arab-Americans during the Gulf war.

San Francisco-area Arab-Americans had "developed a protective relationship" with former San Francisco police Inspector Tom Qerard, only to learn with shock that his files containing more than 12,000 names of Arab-Americans, African Americans and Irish-Americans ended up in

the hands of the ADL, said Mr. Zogby, quoting California newspaper reports.

Mr. Gerard has been reported living in the Philippines after abruptly quitting the police department last year.

Harsh treatment accorded some American citizens of Palestinian ancestry when they try to visit relatives living in the Israeli-occupied territories prompts suspicion that material from U.S. police files is being fed to the Israeli government, Mr. Zogby said.

He cited the case of a Michigan State University student he said was forced to confess to belonging to an Arab student group regarded as illegal in Israel after being shown a detailed file of his U.S. campus activities.

U.K. accuses Iran of outrageous conduct over Rushdie affair

LONDON (AP) — Britain, summoning Iran's top diplomat, Thursday accused Tehran of outrageous behaviour by renewing a death sentence on British author Salman Rushdie.

Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg delivered the protest during a 45-minute meeting with Iranian charge d'affaires Gholamreza Ansari, officials said.

"Mr. Hogg informed the charge d'affaires that this (renewal of the death sentence) was an outrageous infringement of Mr. Rushdie's rights and a violation of international law," the Foreign Office said in a statement.

"It was in effect an incitement to murder," it added.

The statement, to be passed to the Iranian government, was the toughest by Britain in a series of higher profile protests over Mr. Rushdie.

However, there is no indication of what action Britain will take if Iran, as in the past, simply ignores the protests.

Mr. Ansari made no comment to reporters as he was driven from the Foreign Office.

During the meeting, Mr. Ansari handed over a letter from Iranian President Hashemi Raf-

sanjani, the Foreign Office said.

There was no immediate word on whether the letter was about Mr. Rushdie.

Mr. Rushdie has been under police guard since Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued the death sentence, on Feb. 14, 1989 after Mr. Rushdie published "The Satanic Verses." Many Muslims regard the novel as blasphemous.

Iran's current spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, marked the 10th anniversary of the sentence Sunday by saying it was irrevocable.

Mr. Hogg told the Iranian envoy that Britain found this "deeply disturbing."

Mr. Hogg invited Indian-born Rushdie, a naturalised Briton, to the Foreign Office earlier this month.

Mr. Rushdie and his supporters hailed what was his first public meeting with a Foreign Office minister as signalling a new, aggressive approach by Britain's conservative government.

In addition to the renewed death threats, an Iranian government charity has offered \$2 million, plus expenses, for Mr. Rushdie's death.

French fry compromise will make Israeli McDonald's possible

TEL AVIV (AP) — McDonald's got a break Wednesday when a compromise over French fries was worked out paving the way for the hamburger chain to open its first Israeli branch.

The agriculture ministry would help subsidise Israeli potato farmers so they could meet McDonald's standard, spokeswoman Danya Keinan told the Associated Press.

"The potato is not a high-tech instrument," Mr. Keinan said. "It will not be difficult to protect the Israeli market" from overseas potatoes.

Agriculture Minister Yacov Tsur had set junk food enthusiasts' pulses racing Monday when he said he would not allow Israel's first McDonald's to import its French fries frozen from Europe.

Imry Padan, who is setting up

the franchise, said the desiree potato is not readily available in Israel.

But Yair Tamir, who represents Kentucky Fried Chicken in Israel, crowed that Mr. Padan was shirking his patriotic duty.

The requisite potatoes were available from a collective farm south of Tel Aviv. Mr. Tamir told the daily Yedioth Ahronoth — they just cost more than the imported product. Mr. Padan countered that at three times the price it was a legitimate issue.

Mr. Tsur, a member of a collective farm himself, stood his ground. He reminded Israel Radio that until the schedule franchise opening, set for late 1993, was announced last year, McDonald's was perceived to have observed the Arab boycott of Israel. The company has vehemently denied the charge.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkey says general's death not sabotage

ANKARA (R) — The Turkish military has ruled out sabotage in an air crash that killed the mastermind behind its campaign against rebel Kurdish separatists. A military statement late Thursday said icing on both engines of the B-200 Super King air plane caused the crash that killed General Esref Bitlis, commander of the 120,000-strong paramilitary gendarmerie. "According to investigation results, any other assessment or speculation as to the cause of the accident is invalid," the statement said. Newspapers had speculated that sabotage caused Wednesday's crash over Ankara in which Gen. Bitlis and four other soldiers died. Yusuf Bozkurt Ozal, brother of President Turgut Ozal and a parliamentary deputy of the main opposition Motherland Party, blamed the rebel Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) which is fighting for an independent Kurdish state. "If the PKK has been stalled, it was due to General Bitlis's work. This must have been a sabotage by militants who have infiltrated the armed forces," Mr. Ozal told Milliyet newspaper.

Israeli soldier dies in Lebanon accident

TEL AVIV (AP) — An Israeli soldier was killed in an accident in southern Lebanon in which an armoured personnel carrier overturned while on patrol, the army said Friday. It said three other soldiers were slightly injured in the same accident Thursday night that killed Sgt. Nir Dovev. Military sources said an investigation was underway but that the accident, which occurred at the northern edge of Israel's "security zone" in Lebanon, apparently did not result from hostile action. The incident occurred amid a step up in clashes between Israeli-backed militiamen and guerrillas in South Lebanon.

U.S. cancels plans to build VoA station in Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — The United States has cancelled plans to build a Voice of America (VoA) relay station in southern Israel, Israeli radio reported Friday. Army radio said the Clinton administration made the decision as part of budget cuts aimed at reviving the U.S. economy, but added that Washington may consider constructing the station in Kuwait. The cancellation both surprised and pleased Israeli environmentalists who had fought against the plan, arguing that the station would be an ecological upset for wildlife in the area. "We say thank you to the Clinton administration that has rescued us from this woe," said Yogi Sagny, director of the nature protection society, interviewed on the radio. But officials for the Elit Company involved in planning the stations were quoted as expressing disappointment and noting that 600 potential jobs would be lost. The station was initially planned in 1987 when the cold war was still in force, as a broadcast post to former Soviet republics and Eastern Europe.

Heston in Somalia to see aid projects

MOGADISHU (R) — American actor Charlton Heston arrived in Somalia Friday for a three-day visit during which he will inspect aid projects run by the charity Care. A strong supporter of the American military establishment, Mr. Heston immediately held talks with Robert Johnston, head of U.S. forces in Somalia, on "Operation Restore Hope" launched in December to speed up food aid movement to Somalia's starving. Mr. Heston, who was welcomed at Mogadishu airport by a small U.S. troop guard of honour, did not speak to the press. He will visit rehabilitation and food distribution centres run by Care in Mogadishu and the western towns of Bardere and Baidoa, among the areas worst hit by a civil war-induced famine that killed more than 300,000 people in Somalia since 1991.

Journalist murdered in Turkey

SANLIURFA, Turkey (AP) — A reporter for a pro-Kurdish daily was shot dead in this southeastern Turkish province Thursday, raising to 14 the number of journalists murdered over the past 12 months, local officials said. Kemal Kiliç, 28, a local correspondent for the Istanbul-based Ozgur Gundem, was killed by unknown gunmen who followed him with a car as he walked towards his village after getting off a bus from the provincial centre. The newspaper suspended publication on Jan. 15 for "reorganisation" after disappointing sales despite its espousal of the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) which has been fighting a guerrilla war in southeastern Turkey since 1984. Over 5,000 soldiers, insurgents and civilians have died in the fighting. The murder of journalists remains largely unsolved. While many local Kurds suspect the secret police, officials have blamed funding Kurdish separatists and Muslim extremists. The bloody fundamentalist separatist underground war has been particularly intense in the nearby province of Datna, where nearly 140 people were killed over the past 14 months. The killers escaped in almost all cases.

Turkish police seize heroin bounds for Germany

ANKARA (R) — Turkish police seized 82 kilograms of heroin hidden in a truck bound for Germany Friday and arrested four Turks, officials said. They told Anatolia news agency that the drugs, which they valued at seven billion liras (\$756,800), were seized at the Cilgözü border crossing in southern Turkey as the Turkish-owned truck arrived from Syria. Police arrested the driver and owners of the vehicle. The drugs were the second consignment bound for Germany seized by police in southern Turkey this year. Police seized 60 kilograms of pure heroin worth 200 billion (\$2.7 million) on Jan. 7. Turkey is on the so-called Balkan route over which narcotics originating in Afghanistan and Pakistan reach Western Europe.

Tunisia frees intellectual

TUNIS (R) — A Tunisian intellectual has been freed after more than two weeks in jail for forming a committee to defend prisoners of conscience, lawyers said Friday. Salah Hamzaoui, a sociologist, was among 18 intellectuals who earlier this month formed a committee for the defence of prisoners of conscience in Tunisia. He was arrested and the 17 others, mainly university professors and lawyers, have been interrogated by a judge. They are accused of failing to go through the proper legal procedure for forming association. The group is also accused of infringing public order and spreading false information by referring to the alleged existence of human rights abuses and prisoners of conscience. The government says there have been no prisoners of conscience in Tunisia since 1987.

CONDOLENCES

Romero Restaurant sadly announces the sudden passing away of Manager

Sami Qoussous

Sami will be laid to rest following a church service at Um Alhiran Cemetery at 1 p.m. Saturday Feb. 20, 1993.

Condolences will be accepted for three days at the home of Zaid Qoussous — First Circle behind the Bani Hamidah House.

The restaurant will be closed until the end of Ramadan.

Algerian premier seeks support from France

PARIS (Agencies) — Algerian Prime Minister Belaid Abdul Salam, on his first overseas trip since taking office in July, is seeking French support for his government as it battles an escalating terror campaign by Muslim extremists.

Mr. Abdul Salam had a working lunch Thursday with his French counterpart, Pierre Berégovoy, then conferred with President Francois Mitterrand.

"We noted that Franco-Algerian relations are developing well, and we hope this continues," Mr. Abdul Salam said afterwards. "The president conveyed France's wish to be at Algeria's side in any case where it could be useful... especially in this difficult period for our country."

Also on the agenda for Mr. Abdul Salam's two day trip were meetings with parliamentary leaders, executives and former Finance Minister Edouard Balladur, a favourite to succeed Mr. Berégovoy as premier after the conservative opposition's expected victory in legislative elections next month.

France, which ruled Algeria until 1962, has slowly improved relations with Algeria's 13-month-old military backed government after a period of strain early last year. Military leaders

ousted President Chadli Benjedid and cancelled parliamentary elections when were expected to be won by the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Since then, the front has been banned and thousands of its supporters detained in a crackdown that has provoked terrorist retaliation by armed Islamic militants. About 300 security force members have been killed, including four in an ambush this week.

Last week, Defence Minister Khaled Nezzar escaped injury when a booby-trapped car was detonated by remote control along the route of his own vehicle.

Mr. Abdul Salam was expected to seek more details about French support offered last week by France's finance minister, Michel Sapin, during a visit to Algiers.

Violence continues

Islamic militants raked two para-military police vehicles and an army ambulance with gunfire Wednesday, killing three gendarmes and a soldier, Algerian police said.

The official news agency APS quoted gendarmic headquarters as saying the militants struck the convoy on the highway linking the village of Hamdania and the town of Medea, 70 kilometres south of Algiers.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Les Aventures de L'espace

18:30 Envoyé Spécial

19:00 News in French

19:30 Fenetre sur

19:50 News in Hebrew

20:00 News in Arabic

20:30 America's Funniest Home Videos

21:00 Perspectives

21:30 Science Workshop

22:00 News in English

22:20 Feature film: "Return to Justice"

PRAYER TIMES

04:53 Fajr

06:10 (Sunrise) Dhuha

11:00 Dhuhr

14:59 'Asr

17:29 Maghrib

18:06 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terranova Church Tel. 622346

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephrem Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 682208

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will become partly cloudy in the afternoon and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain. Winds will be southwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 3/12

Amman 10/20

Aqaba 10/20

Deserts 1/14

Jordan Valley 7/19

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 14, Aqaba 21. Humidity readings: Amman 34 per cent, Aqaba 38 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Ghazi Abu Shukla 752405

Dr. Adnan Al Zughout 898140

Dr. Jamal Jari 769460

Dr. Mohamed Al Ghoul 790730

Fina pharmacy 661912

Pedrows pharmacy 778336

Al Asma pharmacy 637055

Natroukh pharmacy 622672

Al Salem pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeis pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 647632

IBRD:

Dr. Mohammad Al Za'bi 240816

Al Ouda Pharmacy (-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Mubashir Al Hijawi 981217

Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Emergency 630341

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 891228

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 63021

Hotel Complaints 602800

Price Complaints 6

UNICEF to extend child nutrition programme in Jordan's rural areas

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has agreed to a one-year extension of child nutrition programme for Jordan's rural areas. The programme, which began in 1992, benefits 2,500 children, addition to pregnant women. Agreement on the extension is reached at a meeting Thursday between Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, honorary chairperson of the Queen Alia Jordan Relief Fund (QARF) and Nigel Fisher, UNICEF representative in Jordan.

health education sessions, the statement said. It said people in the settlements of Rish, Bir Mathkour, Qatir, Qureiqra, Rhamen, Manshir, Al Aal, Tawesh, Dsch, Qweisreh Rum, Rashidieh, Salchich and others in Wadi Araba will benefit from the programme which will continue until Feb. 1994.

At the meeting Princess Basma and Mr. Fisher also reviewed UNICEF's 1993-1997 programmes for children in kindergarten, the statement said. At the end of the meeting, Mr. Fisher presented Princess Basma with two vehicles that will be used in a health education programme for the Qeura and Wadi Araba regions.

The child nutrition programme is a cooperative effort of UNICEF and the World Health Organisation (WHO).



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Thursday holds talks with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) representative in Jordan Nigel Fisher (second from left) on extending a child nutrition programme (Petra photo).

House to debate committee report on impediments to agricultural development

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament will meet today in the presence of the Prime Minister and Cabinet members to continue discussion amendments to the 1988 Agriculture Law.

At the meeting also, Minister of Public Works Saad Saour is expected to deliver the government's reply to a question about the purchase of snow-clearing equipment and their distribution to snow-prone governorates.

Eight snow plows bought last year are being distributed to the Irbid, Amman, Balqa and Karak governorates.

Other ministers scheduled to speak at the session are Minister of Information Mahmoud Sharif and Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzak Tubeishat.

Dr. Tubeishat will talk about the government's plan to create new garbage dumping sites and assistance to the town and village councils.

The House is also scheduled to

debate a report by the House Agricultural Committee which presents solutions to chronic problems impeding agricultural development.

Parliament sources said the report calls for the merger of different money-lending institutions which offer credit to farmers, creating a higher council to supervise the agricultural sector and its policies, organising an annual conference to discuss potential problems implementing agricultural policies, decisions re-

garding the manufacturing of agricultural implements and equipment in Jordan (including tractors), increased use of organic rather than chemical fertilisers and increasing controls over pesticide and fertilizer use.

The report also provides suggestions on land use for agricultural production, calls for constructing more dams and drawing up a national plan for the establishment of waste water treatment plants, food processing plants and tomato paste factories.

Discussions at the meeting also focused on food security and human rights in the Arab World.

Prince Hassan stressed that besides political rights, people have the right to food and development, emphasising the need to acquire the Arab people with the issue of food security.

Mr. Saouma said FAO will launch 44 agricultural projects in Jordan, adding that the organisa-

tion will send a delegation to the Kingdom next May to study the needs of the agricultural sector, to which FAO has already allocated \$26 million for 1995 projects.

On Thursday, Prince Hassan met with Italian Foreign Minister Emilio Colombo who described Jordanian-Italian relations as distinguished.

Mr. Colombo supported the Crown Prince's view that the human dimension should be taken into consideration in the ongoing Middle East peace talks.

Earlier Thursday, Prince Hassan met with Pope John Paul II and the Vatican foreign minister for talks on the peace negotiations, bilateral relations and humanitarian issues.

The Crown Prince also met with the board of the Italian Industrialists Association and discussed Jordanian-Italian cooperation in industrial fields.

The two sides agreed that an Italian industrial delegation would visit Jordan to meet with Jordanian businessmen and be familiarised with the investment climate in Jordan.

He said the ministry draws up the economic and social plans and the sectoral projects, follows up on their implementation and assesses the completed work.

Dr. Tougan reviewed the efforts of the ministry ensuring the necessary funds for the projects included in the five-year development plan, particularly the service-related projects.

He added that the ministry also secures financing for the feasibility studies on these projects in the

areas of water supply, education, vocational training, energy, industry, tourism, and agriculture. Dr. Tougan said technical assistance is usually provided by the United Nations and its various organs.

He added that the ministry is in the process of establishing a national information centre on economic, social, technical and scientific areas.

The centre will be based at the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST), he said.

Five-year plan to enlarge role of private sector — Ministry

AMMAN (Petra) — Ministry of Planning Secretary General Safwan Tougan Friday said the ministry is about to finalise the new five-year development plan, adding that the new plan will seek to reactivate and enlarge the role of the private sector in the national economy.

Dr. Tougan said the five-year plan will direct special attention to remedying imbalances and distortions in the national economy and focus on social sectors, with a view to curbing unemployment

and providing new job opportunities.

He also said the plan seeks to provide necessary services and focus more on the role of the private sector in the development process.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency (Petra), Dr. Tougan highlighted the important role of the ministry in formulating plans and development programmes and security financing for such plans.

Crown Prince meets with Italian premier in Rome

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Friday met in Rome with Italian Prime Minister Giuliano Amato and discussed the Middle East peace process and Italy's role in it.

Prince Hassan expressed his keen interest in Italy's calls over the past years for expanding the membership of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to include all Mediterranean countries.

The Crown Prince also met with U.N. Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) Director General Edouard Saouma and reviewed FAO's role in Jordan and the prospect of increasing assistance by the organisation to the Kingdom.

Discussions at the meeting also focused on food security and human rights in the Arab World. Prince Hassan stressed that besides political rights, people have the right to food and development, emphasising the need to acquire the Arab people with the issue of food security.

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The two sides agreed that an Italian industrial delegation would visit Jordan to meet with Jordanian businessmen and be familiarised with the investment climate in Jordan.

Bahrain meeting recommends teaching medicine in Arabic

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Health Aref Bataineh Friday returned to Amman following his participation in a conference on Arabising medical textbooks and terminology in the Arab World. The conference, held in Bahrain, issued recommendations and resolutions urging the Arab states to encourage the teaching of medicine in Arabic, the minister said in an arrival statement.

He said medical schools should commit themselves to this practice and should create incentives to encourage Arabisation of medical terminology.

The conference also encouraged Arab medical institutions to take part in Arabisation efforts. Dr. Bataineh had addressed the conference urging Arab states to Arabise medical and other scientific terminology in order to facilitate the learning process of Arab science students.

He added that years have elapsed since Arab officials called for the Arabisation of medical books but no practical steps were taken so far.

Dr. Bataineh attributed this failure to apprehension on the part of medical schools to deal with a seemingly difficult but important mission.

Dr. Bataineh told participants to the three-day meeting that Arabisation will make it possible for Arab medical scholars and students to discuss medical topics in their mother tongue during their general meetings and conferences. "By Arabising medical books, we do not only show our pride in our language and society, but because science is the right of all and a common heritage of mankind, it is therefore the right of every person to learn about medical advances in his or her own language," the minister said.

He also called for the translation of medical periodicals and textbooks.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF



King receives Pakistani general

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein received at the Royal Court Thursday Chairman of the Pakistani Joint Chiefs of Staff General Shamim Ghulam Khan and an accompanying military delegation. Gen. Khan conveyed to King Hussein a message from Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif praising His Majesty's role and inviting him to visit Pakistan. King Hussein accepted the invitation and asked Gen. Khan to convey his greetings and best wishes to Mr. Sharif and his wishes of further progress and prosperity to the Pakistani people. King Hussein conferred upon the Pakistani general Al Istikbal Military Medal of the First Order. The audience was attended by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Fathi Abu Taleb and the Pakistani ambassador in Amman.

Princess Nafsa opens painting exhibit

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Nafsa opened an exhibition of oil and watercolour paintings by Iraqi artists Muhammad Fradi and Jabbar Mijbel at Alia Art Gallery. The exhibition, which will continue until the end of February, includes 50 paintings depicting natural scenes in Iraq and Jordan.

Saqqaq opens new civil consumers corporation branch

MASHARE (Petra) — Minister of Supply Mohammad Al Saqqaq Thursday opened a new branch of the Civil Consumers Corporation (CCC) in Al Mashare' in the northern Jordan Valley. The branch includes shops of food supplies, clothing, electrical appliances and other commodities. Mr. Saqqaq said at the opening ceremony that the Ministry of Supply plans to open other branches in various parts of the Kingdom to provide services to beneficiaries everywhere. The new branch, he said, will offer services to about 30,000 government and army personnel in the area.

Ministry allocates \$600,000 to wildlife reserves

AMMAN (Petra) — The higher committee for the Dhana Village Project Thursday held a meeting at the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs and the Environment. The meeting, which was chaired by Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzak Tubeishat, decided to allocate \$300,000 to the Dhana Wildlife Reserve near Tafleh in south Jordan, and \$300,000 to Al Azraq Wildlife Reserve, in the eastern desert. The committee also decided to set up a team to follow up and observe the activities of the Dhana Village Project.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

Exhibition of paintings by the late Syrian artist Alfred Hatmal at Al Balqa Art Gallery in Fubeis city.

Exhibition of paintings by four Arab artists from the United States — Ghada Jamal, Helen Khal, Suha Noursi and Afaf Zureyk — at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery in Jabal Amman, between the First and Second Circles (10 a.m. - 6 p.m.)

Exhibition of Romanian textile machineries at the Jordanian Textiles Company in Marka.

Exhibition of oil paintings by Iraqi artist Mohammad Fakher at Baladun Art Gallery.

Exhibition of paintings by Iraqi artists Mohammad Fradi and Jabbar Mijbel at Alia Art Gallery.

Survey of pensioners finds them suffering

AMMAN (Petra) — A survey conducted by the Jordan News Agency (Petra), has found civil and military pensioners in Jordan suffering from economic, social and psychological problems.

The survey, conducted towards the end of 1992, revealed that Jordan has 114,500 retired men and women, accounting for 2.8 per cent of the total population. It said that of the total number of retired persons 71.2 per cent come from the military and the rest from the civil service.

The average age of retirees was 58; and females formed only 6.5 per cent according to the survey.

The survey revealed that 42 per cent of the pensioners had completed less than 21 years of active service and that 47 per cent support families of three to seven members.

More than half of the retirees receive less than JD 60 a month in pension and 77 per cent have no other source of income, the survey showed.

The survey indicated that only 16 per cent of the pensioners were honoured upon their retirement and 46 per cent had worked in the their own towns or villages.

During their service with the government and the military, 70 per cent of the retirees received loans on their wages and salaries as their income was insufficient for their needs, the survey said.

More than 71 per cent of the pensioners said they find no one listening to their views and ideas now, and more than 56 per cent have turned to religion after retirement, the survey showed.

URGENT URGENT URGENT

An international service company would like to hire accountants with the following qualifications:

- University degree graduates in accounting (preferably U.S. graduates).
- 2-5 years of accounting experience.
- Fluent in Arabic and English (spoken & written).
- Working knowledge of computers.

Qualified candidates, please send C.V., photo & credentials NO LATER THAN 28TH OF February to P.O.Box 960913, Amman - attention Human Resources.

Expertise & Evaluation Office
(Al Zahra Establishment)
announces

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at

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On Saturday Feb. 20 and Sunday Feb. 21

Antique Furniture, Artwork, Carpets...

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Starting 10:00 a.m.

Auction will be held daily at 5:00 p.m.

For information call:
Saad Al Masri, Tel. 660000/622617

Part-Time "Buyer" Wanted

"British research firm is extending its worldwide network of "Shoppers" and requires part-time help from a resident of Amman involving shopping for specific, commonly available products in local grocery and other stores. Ability to communicate in English is essential. Please write for details to:

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11s Ltd
18-19 Long Lane
London EC1A 9HE
England

TENDER NOTICE

The Directorate of Projects Services/Ministry of Education announces the retendering of the following tender which is part of the sector project.

Tender's No.	Title	Fees JD
592	B.W. Office Equipment	5,000

Interested bidders are invited to collect tender documents from the Procurement Division of the Directorate of Projects Services/Ministry of Education, starting February 15, 1993 against the payment of the above fees. The deadline is 11:00 a.m. March 20, 1993

Head of Special Tenders Committee
Khalid Al Ghazzawi

U.S. TAXPAYER ASSISTANCE

A taxpayer service specialist from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service will be at the American Embassy in Amman on February 18 to 24 to assist U.S. taxpayers. A special tax seminar will be conducted on Sunday, February 21, at 2:00 p.m. in the United States Information Service auditorium at the embassy. Anyone who is interested will be welcome to attend. No reservation is necessary.

Individual assistance will be provided in the consular section of the embassy at the following times:

February 18	11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
February 21	8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
February 22, 23, and 24	8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Each taxpayer is advised to have a copy of his or her last filed return and to have all papers well organized and scheduled to the extent possible when appearing for assistance.

Service will be on a first come/first serve basis for those without appointments. Individual appointments may be made by calling 820-101, extension 2061.

Income tax forms and information booklets are now available in the consular section of the embassy.

وزارة الأشغال العامة والإسكان
دائرة العطاءات الحكومية
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS & HOUSING
GOVERNMENT TENDERS DIRECTORATE



Invitation For Bids Contract No. 10/93/ Central Ramtha Water Network and House Connections Project

The Water Authority of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation through the Ministry of Public Works and Housing/ Government Tenders Directorate, GTD, "invites experienced contractors from member states of the European Community and contractors from Jordan who have been prequalified by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing of Jordan as first grade water and sewerage, two second grade water and sewerage, second grade water and sewerage and second grade roads or second grade in water and sewerage and second grade in buildings to submit their offers for the supply and construction of Ramtha Water Network and House Connections Project.

Those interested in participating in this tender are requested to contact the Government Tenders Directorate at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing Amman, Jordan to receive tender documents starting from 20/2/1993 and in accordance with the following terms:

1. Scope of work:
Ramtha Water Network and House Connection Project.
a. (DIP) Pipes diam. 3"-12" (48)km.
b. Polyethylene pipes, diam. 3/4", 1", 2" (92) km.
c. Galvanized steel pipes diam 1/2", 3/4" (32) km.
2. The project is partially financed by the European Investment Bank (EIB).
3. Each tender price (300) JD NON-refundable.
4. Last date for purchase of tender documents is Mar. 20, 1993.
5. Offers shall be submitted to the Government Tenders Directorate before 13:30 local time on Sat. Apr. 3, 1993.

Chairman, Central Tenders Committee
Government Tenders Directorate

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975
الجزيرة الأردنية السياسية مستقلة تصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

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Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 6671716, 670141-4
Telex: 21497 ALRAJ JO
Facsimile: 661242

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Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Understanding is what matters

EVER SINCE U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced his plans to visit Jordan and a number of other countries in the Middle East, Jordanian leaders have been saying they will be ready to cooperate with him not only on efforts for Arab-Israeli peace but also on the question of regional stability and how to enhance it through political vision and advancing the cause of democracy and human rights.

On the latter point, His Majesty King Hussein was very clear when he established a commission for the advancement of human rights and democracy in Jordan and the Arab World only last week.

"The aim is to enhance the Jordanian democratic experience and to liberate our intellectual and creative capabilities towards the goal of establishing a comprehensive paradigm for political, social and cultural democracy," the King had told members of the commission, stressing that the long-term objective was to "crystallize the vision for a future phase from which will emanate an overall Arab movement rekindling the Arab renaissance."

Many of us here in Jordan have consistently maintained that it was not only the Kingdom's position on the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait that had angered the leaders of the oil-rich Arab Gulf countries, leading to the present-day alienation from them, but it was also the King's decision to opt for democracy that upset those and other regimes in the region, including probably Israel, which does not want to see Arab "rivals" for its "democratic" image in the eyes of the West. The fact now that the King continues to insist on writing "Arab history with liberty and freedom rather than oil" means that he sees a new role for Jordan to play in the unipolar world led by Democratic President Bill Clinton and his colleagues.

Mr. Christopher's State Department has already made it known that the new U.S. policies will be largely determined by other countries' respect for human rights and efforts to democratize their systems, and has in fact demonstrated its willingness and ability to support Jordan in this regard.

But how far Washington is willing to go in backing Jordan's quest for peace and democracy in the whole region and how any joint effort can help the Kingdom stay the course and gain strength in the process is an open question that will likely come up in the course of the secretary's important talks here.

On the other intricate subject of the peace process, Jordan is ready to do what is required to keep hopes alive, even though we are not necessarily optimistic about the chances of breakthroughs with the Israelis, given the Rabin government's proclivity to treat the Palestinians in the same way its Likud predecessors did. But it is up to the Palestinian people and its legitimate leadership to negotiate and tell Mr. Christopher what they want. If the PLO decides it is ready to accept the compromise formula brokered by the U.S. on the expulsion crisis, this is fine with us. The Jordanians generally believe, however, that they cannot accept efforts to partition and compartmentalize U.N. resolutions, some of which were implemented by force against Iraq and others, which, like 242, have to be enforced in full if there is to be a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace settlement.

Furthermore, the Secretary of State will no doubt hear that the Jordanians want from the U.S. stronger and more sincere efforts to bring Iraq back into the comity of nations and to end as soon as possible the painful sanctions against the Iraqi people. All regimes in the area, and the Gulf in particular, have not only to respect international law and legitimacy but also learn to coexist in peace and harmony in order to ensure regional stability, progress and prosperity for their peoples. If they all do that, including the regime in Baghdad of course, they will find in the centrist Jordanian position a block to build on and in Jordan a friend who is always ready to cooperate and help.

Mr. Christopher and his delegation are most welcome among friends in this country, and we hope his talks here will be most productive and useful to peace, progress and friendship.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i Arabic daily described His Majesty King Hussein's speech to the faculty and students of Yarmouk University Tuesday as a national voice encouraging democracy and freedom for all Arab citizens. Indeed, the King's words concerning the need to grant all Arabs their freedom and their rights came at a time when the Arab World witnesses Arab states whose peoples exercise no rights. Instead, these peoples are geared to applaud the leaders' desires and orders, said the daily. The paper also said that certain Arab leaders, who deny their people their rights, try to escape their responsibilities towards the citizenry by choosing to alienate themselves from the nation. These rulers imagine that their dignity could be respected outside their nation and not through actions which can safeguard pan-Arab interests. The paper said that King Hussein's words have now reached all parts of the Arab World and his brave stand in support of the oppressed and the human rights of Arab peoples is valued and appreciated. Indeed, through his wise leadership and national stands, King Hussein has gained Jordan respect and has become the pride of the nation, the paper continued. Al Ra'i also appreciated that the King has expressed his deep respect and support for the creative and skilled amongst our people, with His Majesty urging educational institutions to march ahead with programmes and plans that build a population equipped for a brighter future.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily said that the peace process remains in deep crisis as a result of the Israeli decision not to repatriate all of the evictees who are now stranded in southern Lebanon. This situation persists even as American Secretary of State Warren Christopher prepares for his meetings with the leaders of Israel and the Arab countries and at a time when Yitzhak Rabin remains intransigent, the writer noted. Needless to say, the Palestine question continues to be at the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict and without a fair and permanent solution for the Palestinian people's future nothing can be gained on the other fronts. Rimawi concluded. He said that if Israel is really inclined to achieve peace with the Arabs, Tel Aviv should first settle the Palestine question and give back the usurped Palestinian rights and homeland. But should the United States leave the expellees question unresolved while directing its attention solely towards resuming the peace talks, Washington will be leaving a ticking time bomb in the region, he added. The Arab parties boycotted the last day of the eighth meeting with the Israelis in Washington in protest against the decision to deport the Palestinians and have demanded that Resolution 799 be implemented in full, Rimawi noted.

Accepting the affliction?!

By Dr. As'ad Abdul Rahman

THE CURRENT visit by the new American Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, to some Middle Eastern countries carries many meanings and will lead to important results, positive or negative. In addition to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Kuwait, Jordan and Israel, Mr. Christopher might also include a surprise visit to Lebanon, unannounced beforehand, in keeping with American security considerations.

Among the special meanings of this visit is that the choice of the Middle East to be his first trip abroad signals a certain message: that in dealing with internal issues, the U.S. will not ignore world problems, and that President Bill Clinton's administration is determined to continue with the political settlement of the tripartite Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of several considerations. The first consideration is that the area is important, sensitive and volatile. The second is that Mr. Christopher's "preventive diplomacy" is being put into practice to preempt any explosions. The third is to stress the continued special role of the two influential Arab states of the region, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, not to mention the special message of support for Kuwait (added to the programme as an afterthought) directed to both Iraq and Iran. But what about the special meanings of this visit for the political settlement?

After his meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, on the eve of this visit, Mr. Christopher sounded less optimistic than Mr. Peres who talked about two aims of the expected visit. The first aim, according to Mr. Peres, is the continuation of the peace talks and the second is the adoption of a new agenda for the talks. The secretary, however, was more restrained when he assigned, at least on the face of it, more humble tasks to his mission: fact finding — as if the U.S. does not know all about the area — and to get to know the leaders of the region and their opinions at first hand to evaluate the situation in order to push the peace process forward, "without expecting immediate approval," for continuing the bilateral and multilateral talks, "which will hopefully start again after this visit."

Secretary Christopher knows, of course, that the American-Israeli agreement

concerning the Palestinian evictees, imposed on the Security Council, has exasperated feelings of anger among the Arabs towards the increasing political hypocrisy and the tendency to apply double standards in the American Middle East policy. How could this visit, surrounded as it is by all the different scenarios, rumours and "information", be successful?

More than one scenario about the outcome of this visit is emerging. This is tied to the request by official Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi that Israel prove its good intentions by actual deeds in improving human rights practices in the occupied territories and by specifying a timetable for implementing self-rule for the Palestinians. Some observers expect Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to announce a marked easing of oppressive measures against the Palestinians in the occupied territories, in line with Palestinian, Arab and international demands upon Israel to comply with the Fourth Geneva Convention and human rights in general. Others expect Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to announce another "generous gesture" towards the secretary's visit by allowing more expellees to go back home, by shortening their ex-

pulsion period or by putting them in a military camp in Israeli-occupied southern Lebanon until their time is up. Some Arabs and Israelis, inside and outside Israel, expect — or demand — that Israel take the initiative of opening a direct dialogue with the PLO, following the recent Knesset decision of lifting the ban on contacts with the Palestinian organisation. Yet others expect "new Israeli concessions" in the Palestinian autonomy question or withdrawal from the Golan Heights. Some even expect the American administration itself to revive direct contacts with the PLO, which obviously, directs the Palestinian negotiating team and especially after the PLO leadership in Tunis has shown "more moderation" than the representatives from the occupied territories led by Haider Abdul Shafi.

Rumours also would have the expellees spend the remainder of their time on an extended religious pilgrimage to the Islamic holy sites in Saudi Arabia.

All these rumours and "information" brandished about are but an expression of the objectives impotence, and hence dilemma, facing the PLO in going back to the negotiating table before a solution, or a compensating formula,

is found for the expellees. This situation emerged out of the traditional Palestinian and Arab conviction that expelling Palestinians is a strategic Israeli policy, whether executed by Likud or Labour. The expulsion operation this time, which exceeded in magnitude previous limits, has also shown the Security Council to be nothing more than a tool of the American policy, when it accepted an American-Israeli agreement to bypass its Resolution 799 calling for the immediate return of all the expelled Palestinians. To many Arabs and Palestinians, this precedent is a clear indication that the Americans are trying to impose a political settlement based on agreements with Israel and disregarding the Madrid, let alone the U.N., frameworks.

Following this scenario, even moderate Palestinians and Arabs are increasingly uneasy about just playing the role of a "false witness" or "rubber stamp" to an American-Israeli formula instead of a negotiated settlement or a solution acceptable to the present and future generations in the region.

Related to this argument, there is another one leading the moderates to more frustration and pessimism. If the world community is unable to execute international legitimacy as expressed in the simple and straightforward Resolution 799, how will it ever be able to execute a more ambiguous and complex resolution, such as 242?

According to the Madrid formula, it was agreed to negotiate for 21.5 per cent of the historical land of Palestine. So, in the words of journalist Joseph Samaha, "we are requested by a moderate Israeli government to negotiate about a quarter of authority over a quarter of the people in a quarter of the land" and now we have to accept the return of only a quarter of the expellees! In view of all these contradictions and developments, and particularly in view of Mr. Rabin's and the new American administration's policies, a substantial number of moderate Arabs (including Palestinians) are reminded of the Arab saying: "We accept the affliction ... but the affliction does not accept us."

The writer is director of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation and member of Palestine National Council (PNC).



LETTERS

Traits of honesty for here

To the Editor:

I believe that in the election of President Bill Clinton, the American people were voicing their desire for change. They hoped that issues which had festered on for years would be tackled and a new breath of youth, honesty and integrity was envisioned. In some aspects, the American public has not been disappointed. Hillary Clinton has been appointed to study ways to overhaul the United States' health programmes, and President Clinton, in his State of the Union Address, has proposed new taxes and cuts in government expenditures to lower the budget deficit. This desire to tackle issues head-on is highly commendable.

What we in the Middle East would like to see are these same commendable traits of honesty and determination applied to this part of the world. The United States is signatory to the Fourth Geneva Convention and as such to Article 49 of the convention relative to the Protection of Civilians in Time of War, which states: "Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the occupying power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive."

There has yet to be any law, convention, treaty or act which contravenes this noble article. The United Nations Security Council acknowledged this when they passed Resolution 799 calling on the Israeli government to immediately return to the occupied territories the 400 Palestinians expelled from their homes. Until there is such a document, universally accepted, which states that the Geneva convention relative to the Protection of Civilians in Time of War applies to all peoples except Palestinians, it is the obligation of all states signatory to the Fourth Geneva Convention to honour their legal and moral obligations in full. Any attempt by the Israeli government, or any other government, to reinterpret or circumvent these obligations, discredits those governments and makes a mockery of their justice system.

Therefore, we urge the visiting U.S. secretary of state, Warren Christopher, to see to it that the same determination that President Clinton has demonstrated in tackling arduous domestic issues will now be applied to resolving the legal and human rights of the expelled Palestinians. With this solution, and demonstration of the integrity of the United States, resumption and success of the Middle East peace talks will be only a matter of time.

Karen Asfour,
Amman

242 vs. 799

To the Editor,

FOR more than two months now, Israel still refuses to comply with Security Council Resolution 799 concerning the Palestinian evictees in southern Lebanon. But the Western countries, mainly U.S., Britain and France, show no interest or even sympathy for the miserable situation of the expellees. On the contrary, they continue to condone Israel's rejection of Resolution 799.

At the same time, Iraq, as well as Libya, must respect all Security Council resolutions, without any exception, while Israel, which occupied Palestine many years ago, until now refuses to observe Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

Israel seems to be above the international legitimacy; it seems that the Security Council lets Israel be because of the weak position of the Arabs.

Some believe that the U.S. backs Israel to help it be superior. And this is due to the Arab states' position vis-a-vis each other. If the Arabs want to resolve the evictees' problem, and other problems, they have to take a collective action and a practical step to force Israel to take the expellees back to their homes.

And the U.N. should become what it was first meant to be: a fair organisation which everybody would look up to.

Samer Ababneh and
Nabeel Shabaneh,
Yarmouk University,
P.O. Box 3243,
Irbid.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

U.S. should recognise linkage between peace talks and implementation of 799

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

THE visit of the American Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the Middle East region, the continued plight of the Palestinian expellees in southern Lebanon, the situation in Iraq and a host of domestic issues were given prominence by the local Jordanian press during the past week.

One Christopher discovered America, "the new world", 500 years ago and another Christopher now embarks to discover the Middle East (the old world), read an article in Al Dustour daily by columnist Mohammad Kawash.

In a statement prior to his departure for the region, Mr. Christopher was quoted as saying that his tour here was an exploratory mission to understand the viewpoints of the different parties to the conflict. What the Arabs can say to Mr. Christopher, said the writer, is: "come and behold our spilled blood in the street and the atrocities that have been going on for ages at the hands of the Israeli occupation forces."

Sawt Al Shaab said that Mr. Christopher's visit could mark a turning point in the peace process if the U.S. secretary of state manifests a genuine desire to understand the Arab parties' views. But, conversely, his mission could be obstructed if the Palestinian evictees problem remains unresolved.

The Arab capitals Mr. Christopher is visiting have already displayed apprehension about Washington's moves and concern over the Americans' lack of desire to see Resolution 799 implemented, said Sawt Al

Shaab. The paper noted that the Arabs are reluctant to resume the peace talks, afraid that Washington would play the same gambit over the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338.

Mr. Christopher arrives in the Middle East with a clear intention to inquire as to whether the Arab countries involved in the peace process desire to resume the negotiations with Israel at this point said Mohammad Kharoub, a columnist in Al Ra'i newspaper. This is part and parcel of a concerted U.S.-Israeli diplomatic offensive launched with the aim of breaching the Arab parties' united stand vis-a-vis the talks with Israel, he said.

The writer argued that Mr. Christopher will be presenting his inquiry while noting that the U.N. Security Council has approved of Israel's bid to return 101 Palestinians immediately and the rest by the end of the year. The Arabs, he said, should provide a unified response to this demarche because the ball is in their court. The Arab parties must give a realistic and applicable reply that will simultaneously help the peace process continue and secure the Palestinians' return to their homeland, he concluded.

Salameh Ekour of Sawt Al Shaab cast a gloomy picture on the expellees' affair, noting that Mr. Christopher would not hear a single word in any Arab capital defying the U.S. call for the resumption of the peace negotiations with Israel. Arab leaders might altogether ignore the evictees

question and Resolution 799, which they consider as secondary in importance, the writer noted.

Secretary Christopher's visit to the region has no meaning except to emphasise the success of Yitzhak Rabin and the collusion of certain Arab and Palestinian sources. The writer concluded that the Palestinians and the Arabs at large are the net losers because Washington has succeeded in diluting and weakening the Arab stand and U.N. Resolution 799.

Saleh Al Qallab demanded from the Arab parties an emphasis upon certain principles and firm stands in their talks with Mr. Christopher. The columnist said in Al Dustour that the Arab parties should make it clear that the Palestine question remains at the heart of the whole Arab-Israeli conflict and that no Israeli Arab party can reach a separate solution with Israel. Either all Arab parties should take part in the peace negotiations or none at all, he stressed.

Commenting on the U.N. Security Council's decision to change Resolution 799, Sawt Al Shaab daily said that by adopting an amendment to that resolution the council has undermined its own credibility and further encouraged the Israelis to disregard any future resolutions. The paper added that the amendment, which came as a result of U.S. influence and pressure on the council, was a victory for the Rabin government, which refuses to comply with the requirements of international legitimacy. Two months have passed

since the start of the Palestinian evictees' ordeal in southern Lebanon and nothing has been done to bring them home, said Al Dustour daily. The past two months clearly have proven the total impotence of the Security Council even in implementing its own resolution and have demonstrated the failure of any attempt, even on the part of the U.N. secretary general, to reverse this situation.

The U.N. secretary general has already sent three envoys to Israel and the Arab countries to discuss the problem, noted Al Dustour. The past two months have made manifest to the whole world that Israel is permitted to act above international law and that no power on earth either can or is willing to force the Jewish state to succumb to the will of the world community, the paper commented.

In the view of Taher Al Udwan, a columnist in Al Dustour, certain Arab parties, in addition of course to Israel and the United States, have benefitted from the amendment of U.N. Security Council Resolution 799. The writer said that certain Arab states involved in the peace process used the evictees' plight as a trump card with which they hoped to pressure the Americans and improve their bargaining position for their own selfish interests. The writer believes the Palestinians should remain adamant in their position and demand the full implementation of the council's resolution.

Tackling the ongoing atrocities committed by Mr. Rabin and his government against the

Palestinians, Dr. Ghazi Zureigi said in Al Ra'i that Premier Rabin seems to have decided to terminate the Palestinian intifada at any cost. The killing of Palestinians, the demolition of their homes and the eviction of activists all furnish images of the Israeli plan being implemented with support from the United States. Israel, he argues, does not want substantive peace with the Arabs, who seek to regain their lands and rights. Instead, the regime aims for a peace which ensures the continued occupation of Arab lands.

The time has come to bridle this "monster" Rabin, who brags about peace but continues to commit crimes, declared Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour daily. The writer said that the United Nations has to intervene and put an end to Israel's massacre of Palestinians and eviction of Arab peoples from their homeland. The writer believes that the Arab countries are bound to resume peace negotiations with her, has a free hand to carry out atrocities in the occupied lands.

Fahed Al Fanek discussed the situation of Iraq in the post-war era noting that the Iraqis have benefitted from the sanctions imposed on them over the past three years by relying upon themselves for reconstruction and more food production. The columnist, who writes in Al Ra'i daily, said that the Iraqis have achieved a miracle and aborted the sanctions imposed unjustly by the U.S.-led coalition and succeeded in pursuing recon-

struction under enforced anarchy. In spite of the sanctions the Iraqis opened a 565 kilometre long river, rebuilt whole districts, reinstated their devastated communications and factories and produced food on more than two million hectares of land, observed the writer.

A columnist in Al Dustour attacked a proposed amendment to the country's education law which calls for segregating male and female students. The writer, Mohammad Kawash, said that such segregation was bound to create more problems for a Jordanian society which already suffers from poverty and unemployment. Apart from the fact that such an amendment will be impossible to execute, separating males and females is an idea that is not founded on either religious or ethical grounds, he noted. What Jordanians should do is instill high morals into their children, give them a proper education and prepare the ground for them to build a better future together.

Rajaa Abu Ghazaleh, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, described as a manifestation of backwardness the onslaught of men on women in Arab society. With the increase in the ferocity of the imperialist countries' pressure on the Arab nation, the siege imposed by men on women in Arab society has likewise been increasing, said the writer.

The writer said that the imperialist nations reached a high standard of development after them a share in the construction of society and in the carrying out of development.

Prince Hassan hopes for U.S. fairness

(Continued from page 1)

received any compensation. He added that the international community has so far failed to deal seriously with the 350,000 returnees who have come home to Jordan after their eviction from Kuwait.

On Jordan's democratic experience, Prince Hassan said some people think that what happened in Jordan was a rebellion, "but I think they should ask themselves why Jordan opened the trouble box. We will not allow instability to affect our democratic experience."

Asked whether Iraqi President Saddam Hussein would respect U.N. resolutions, Prince Hassan said it was "a matter of time," and stressed that Iraq respects the U.N. resolutions.

In this regard, Prince Hassan stressed the need for opening a

dialogue between Iraq and the international community, including the U.S.

In another interview with Radio Monte Carlo, Prince Hassan stressed Jordan's belief in pluralism, saying it would enrich democracy and enhance the institutions, democracy and the rule of law.

Asked if Jordan saw the peace talks and the expellee crisis as separate issues, Prince Hassan said there was a separation between human rights and refugees issues adding that the expellee crisis was one of the forms which the Palestinian problem has taken since 1984.

He noted that Jordan has suffered from this problem, and so had Lebanon.

He pointed out that Jordan's preparations to participate in the

human rights summit, which will be held Vienna in June, is an integral part of the preparation for a "human file," which will be presented to the Clinton administration.

Asked about Jordan's expectations from the new U.S. administration, Prince Hassan said Jordan expects a reevaluation of the peace process, be it bilateral talks or multilateral talks, and to take into consideration the interaction and integration of the titles and issues. The Crown Prince stressed the need for an evaluation aimed at finding an identity to this region.

"I think the governments of this region would be ready to move from the concept of favoured bilateral relation as to the concept of regional cooperation had there been external indications converging with the aspirations of the people in this region," Prince Hassan said.

Arafat leaves Amman after talks

(Continued from page 1)

PLO sources in Amman said the proposal was tabled by Egypt and had the support of the PLO Executive Committee, a coalition partner in Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's government.

Mr. Arafat, who was presented the proposal two weeks ago, discussed the deal with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak before he flew to Amman Thursday, PLO officials said.

There are several conditions that Israel has to fulfil as part of the proposed deal, said one official. "It entails a firm commitment that all the expellees would be returned to the occupied territories in the next four months, starting with an immediate batch of at least 140, another 140 next month and the rest before the beginning of June."

Israel expelled 415 Palestinians in December, 19 of them were allowed to return either because their expulsions were said to have been made in error or they were sick. The expellees remain in a tent camp in South Lebanon between Israeli and Lebanese army lines.

Under the proposed deal, the expellees would be moved to Israel's self-styled "security zone" in South Lebanon as an interim measure.

There was no immediate indication of how Mr. Rabin was viewing the compromise, and

analysts said the Israeli prime minister appeared to be reserving comment until he met with Mr. Christopher this week.

The expellees, accused by Israel as hardcore organisers of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Islamic Jihad groups, have rejected any piecemeal solution to their plight (see separate story).

During his visit to Amman, Mr. Arafat also met with Faisal Husseini, head of the steering committee of the Palestinian delegation to peace talks, and Saeb Erakat, a negotiator.

Mr. Husseini and Dr. Erakat returned to the occupied territories Friday to await Mr. Christopher, whom they would be meeting Monday in occupied Jerusalem.

Mr. Husseini and Dr. Erakat "have been given a very clear Palestinian position to be presented to the U.S. secretary," said a Palestinian source. "It is simple: the course of the peace process depends on a quick solution to the expulsion crisis and the U.S. should exert all efforts to ensure that 799 is implemented."

The main concern of the Arabs is that if Israel was allowed to twist Resolution 799 to make it suit its purposes, then the validity and implementation of earlier Security Council resolutions

Egypt, U.S. to seek talks resumption

(Continued from page 1)

the United States was committed to the peace process.

In his week in the Middle East, Mr. Christopher hopes to persuade Palestinians and Israelis to resume peace talks which have been suspended since the Dec. 17 expulsions of the Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Before the Mubarak-Christopher talks, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat stopped at Cairo airport for one hour to meet presidential adviser Osama Al Bazz on his way from Amman to Khartoum.

A senior PLO official said Mr. Arafat was considering a proposal on the expellees. (See separate story).

If the crisis was not settled and compromises were not made by the Arabs and Israel, a senior U.S. official warned Thursday, President Clinton might consider Middle East peace-making to a back burner.

"There are important opportunities here that should not be missed by the parties," Mr. Christopher said on his arrival in Cairo. "We have come to the region ready to do our best, and we will be assessing whether the parties are ready to do theirs."

A senior U.S. official told reporters on route from Washington that the Arab-Israeli conflict "can't continue to have a high priority if we're pushing against a closed door."

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, added: "You have to have some indication of willingness on their part to make some of the tough decisions."

Mr. Mubarak met here Wednesday with Mr. Arafat.

Jordanian Information Minister Mahmoud Sharif said Friday: "We fear that if the problem of the deportees is not solved, the Palestinian delegation may not go to the peace talks. In such a case, the whole process may be hampered."

Saudi Arabia's defence minister, Prince Sultan, stressed that the kingdom wants "implementation of all existing (United Nations) resolutions whether they pertain to the Gulf, Israel or Bosnia-Herzegovina." If they are not, "the big powers and the peace-loving nations in the Security Council lose their credibility," he told Italian reporters who accompanied Italian Defence Minister Salvatore Ando on a trip to Saudi Arabia Thursday.

Syrian government newspaper Al Thawra warned that "Washington's one-sided policy and unlimited bias towards the Israeli side" would encourage Israel to "put obstacles in the way of peace."

After stops in Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Israel, Mr. Christopher will report his findings to Mr. Clinton. Before he met with Mr. Mubarak, Mr. Christopher spent the morning sightseeing, touring the pharaonic wonders of 46 centuries ago, including the solar boat constructed to take King Cheops to heaven, the Pyramids and the Sphinx.

"I make no apologies about doing that," he said. "It seems to me it gives a context to what you are trying to achieve. It's also a reminder to build some structures that are enduring."

Mr. Christopher visit to Egypt came as special U.S.-Cairo relations are likely to be tested by budget cuts, Egyptian and U.S. officials said.

"It's no coincidence that President Bill Clinton sent me to Egypt as the first stop on my first journey outside the United States as secretary of state," Mr. Christopher told reporters upon arrival.

"We are proud to count Egypt as a close and important friend of the United States," Mr. Christopher said, heaping praise on the political leadership which helped build the Gulf war alliance against Iraq and is now mediating between the Arabs and Israel.

While both sides stress publicly that the new Clinton administration wants no change in special ties, Egyptian officials and Cairo-based U.S. diplomats are privately preparing for a cut in aid which could ultimately weaken them.

Egypt has been a firm U.S. ally nearly 20 years, receiving \$2.2 billion a year in aid by an act of Congress, more than any other country except its peace partner Israel.

The U.S. embassy in Cairo is one of the biggest in the world and Egypt hosts a 40,000-strong American community, many of them businessmen and their families linked to aid projects.

But Washington's expansive foreign aid programme, fuelled in the cold war by a need to outdo the now defunct Soviet Union in winning friends around the world, is high on the hit list of Mr. Clinton's budget choppers.

About \$1.4 billion a year goes straight into the coffers of the Egyptian armed forces and is not publicly accounted for.

During the Gulf war, the U.S. wiped out \$7 billion in military debt and Western economists say political pressure from Washington is now holding off Egypt's other Western creditors, who are anxious that economic reforms they backed with \$10 billion of debt forgiveness are not going as planned.

With apartheid's demise, South Africa moves into Gulf arms market

By Ed Blanche
The Associated Press

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — South Africa, isolated for decades because of its racist policies, is making muscular moves into the lucrative Gulf arms market and trying to establish an economic foothold in the region now that apartheid has ended.

The country's defence industry is one of the major exhibitors at a major show in the southern Gulf emirate and the region's armed forces are showing interest in its long range artillery, helicopter gunships and advanced electronics.

"We think there's a great potential for our products in the region," said the head of the South African delegation, Deputy Defence Minister Wynand Breytenbach. He is accompanied by South Africa's defence forces commander, Gen. Kat Lieberg.

He said that with South Africa's racial barriers crumbling, he expects the U.N. economic embargo imposed on South Africa in 1970 will soon be lifted.

"The way things are going in South Africa, we hope to have

elections next year that will lead to the embargo being lifted," Mr. Breytenbach told the Associated Press.

"This is vitally important to us. We need to get back into the marketplace because we badly need the hard currency. Now that our security situation has improved, we're cutting down on our armed forces so our defence industry has to develop new markets. We've invested very heavily in our arms industry over the years and we need to get back that investment."

He said South Africa has sold weapons to two countries in the Gulf region, but declined to name them or say what military systems they have bought.

But South African sources said that interest had centred on the renowned G5 155 artillery gun with a range of 30 kilometres and famed for its accuracy, the G6 self-propelled 155mm gun combat-tested in Angola several years ago, the Valkyrie 127mm multiple rocket launcher and helicopter gunships.

All these systems were developed by the state run Armscor organisation after the U.N.

embargo forced the South Africans to be self-reliant in arms production. These weapons have all been proven in combat in Angola, where for years the South Africans battled with the leftist Luanda government's forces and the Cubans.

Mr. Breytenbach stressed that while the embargo remains technically in force, South Africa is moving cautiously as it strives to break into the world market after years of isolation.

"We're being very careful about who we sell to," he said. "We're not selling to countries that could embarrass our friends in the United Nations."

He did not elaborate. But he was clearly talking about Iraq, which acquired G5 artillery during the 1980-88 war with Iran and used them against the U.S.-led allies in the 1991 Gulf war. Iran, which needs long-range artillery, also is likely to be excluded from South Africa's sales list because its current large scale rearmament programme is causing alarm among the Gulf Arab states.

South Africa's moves into the arms market are only part of the country's strategy of building up economic links with the oil rich

Gulf region. Over the last year or so, the South Africans have been establishing links despite the continuing Arab ban on trade with Pretoria.

The Arab League, which imposed its own sanctions because of apartheid and South Africa's military links with Israel, is not likely to end its embargo until the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) does so.

The Arabs have been particularly angered by Pretoria's cooperation with Israel in developing the Jewish state's nuclear weapons. But, unofficially, they are right now slowly normalising their relations with Pretoria.

In 1991, South African trade delegations have visited the Gulf states, Egypt and other Arab states. Representatives from some Arab states, like Bahrain, have visited South Africa in recent months.

More than 100 South African companies staged their first Middle East exhibition in Dubai, commercial hub of the UAE, last October. More than 50 representatives of UAE oil, tourist, aviation and other enterprises spent five days in Johannesburg earlier this month.

Last December, South Africa first secured deals worth more than \$20 million in Sharjah, one of the seven emirates in the UAE, and another South African delegation representing more than 100 businesses is expected in Dubai next week.

The Durban-based Unicorn Shipping Co. started the first direct maritime link with the Gulf last summer and the private South African airline Flitestar is operating flights between Bahrain, the Gulf's financial nerve centre, and Johannesburg.

The South Africans have been focusing on the Gulf because they want access to its oil. There are indications that Pretoria has already secured some oil supplies from the region, despite the absence of diplomatic relations.

While apartheid was in force, South Africa was unofficially getting oil from the Gulf through middlemen despite the sanctions. Now, sources here noted, that trade seems to be increasing. They said Pretoria is understood to be now depleting its strategic reserves stored in disused mines, a sure sign its supplies are becoming regularised.

Geophysicists locate Bronze Age wall in Troy

By Dr. Robert Lutz

Since 1988 German archeologists have been taking part in an excavation in the area of Troy, during which two Munich geophysicists succeeded in making a sensational discovery: By using a geomagnetic detector they managed to locate the wall surrounding the outer city of Troy in the Bronze Age.

Computer-based analysis has revealed that the wall and buildings within the wall's perimeter were destroyed by a devastating fire.

Tourists visiting the site of Troy in western Turkey are confused and often disappointed when they first view the man-made mound, some 200 by 150 metres in area, and the surrounding stone walls and graves. Referred to as Hisarlik in Turkish — which means literally "hill with a fortress" — the site would have commanded considerable strategic importance by having allowed the Trojans control over traffic entering and leaving the Black Sea. This once so powerful city, besieged by the Greeks at the portals to the Dardanelles for 10 years, was immortalised by the Greek poet Homer in his epic

poem Iliad around 730 B.C..

When in August 1868 he stood for the first time on the fortress of Hisarlik, Heinrich Schliemann believed he had discovered the site of ancient Troy. Since 1988, a team of German archeologists headed by professor Manfred Korfmann from the University of Tübingen has been engaged in a successful excavation in the famous city and 1992 saw yet another digging expedition, the 21st since 1871, involving collaboration with a team of international scientists from eight countries.

Today it is evident that Hisarlik was nothing other than the Acropolis of the city of Troy — the palace, temple and the hill. The lower area of the city, inhabited by the common folk — craftsmen, merchants and sailors — has yet to be excavated by the archeologists, even though, Mr. Schliemann himself was convinced that there must have been a settlement outside the fortress walls.

This outer area is also stratified with settlement layers from the previous occupations of Troy: At the upper level, Roman Troy; underneath the Hellenic; and still

further down, there is evidence of Bronze Age Troy from around 1200 B.C. — the time in which the legendary Trojan war was said to have taken place. Although experts have not been able to date the fall of Troy with absolute certainty, they believe that it must have occurred in the Bronze Age layer of occupation, named Troy VI or Troy VIIa. Both strata have revealed clear evidence of a devastating fire. This (alleged) event also took place in an epoch, the Late Bronze Age, which saw major political and cultural upheaval throughout the whole East Mediterranean region — with the collapse of the Hittite kingdoms in Anatolia, the city cultures in Greece and in Cyprus, and the plundering of Egypt by seafaring peoples.

Following Mr. Schliemann's work, early excavation on the outskirts of the city, at the foot of the fortress, was also undertaken by the German archeologist Wilhelm Dörpfeld and later, in the 1930s, by the American Carl Blegen. The latter discovered the ruins of a Bronze Age dwelling, destroyed by fire, some 400 metres in front of the fortress.

Mr. Korfmann then unearthed further evidence supporting the existence of a Bronze Age settlement on the city outskirts, 200 metres from the fortress wall. His findings suggested that this outer part of the city of Troy was sited on a four-metre-high plateau to the south. Yet, despite numerous excavations, archeologists were unable to locate the city wall (or what remains of it) and the borders of the outer city.

In August 1992, the geophysicists Dr. Helmut Becker and Jörg Faßbinder from the State Office for the Preservation of Historical Monuments and Sites in Munich, made a sensational discovery. Armed with geomagnetic detectors they located the position of the Bronze Age outer city wall of the lower settlement, i.e. the city wall of Troy VI or Troy VIIa. Measuring 120 metres long and extending some 400 metres to the south of the fortress wall, this find indicates that the size of this Bronze Age outer city would have matched that of 12th century Munich.

In Munich, Mr. Becker transferred the data into an image-producing computer, which converts the magnetic field distur-

ances into a grey image resembling a black and white photo. For example, at the upper level, the computer depicted clearly the right-angled streets of Roman Troy, which in principle stems from the time of Emperor Augustus and survived well into the 6th Century A.D.. Underneath lies Hellenic Troy, built some two or three hundred years previously by the Greeks. The third layer is the late Bronze Age Troy with its outer city walls, which appear to be of huge dimensions: a claybrick wall, mounted most probably on a stone foundation, measuring between 3.5-4 metres across.

"This is an incredibly thick wall, with which I believe the residents wanted to demonstrate their power," said Mr. Becker. It would appear that the city wall, which today is submerged two to three metres beneath the surface, was destroyed by a terrible fire. Yet archeologists will have to conduct further excavation before, determining whether Troy was destroyed by war or, for example, by an earthquake. The quest to substantiate or refute the legend of the Trojan war continues — The German Research Service.

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"Greatest boxing show on Earth" set for today

MEXICO CITY (R) — What promoter Don King modestly described as "the greatest boxing show on Earth" will take place Saturday with four championship matches in front of what may be the biggest crowd in the sport's history.

As many as 130,000 people are expected to fill the giant Aztec Stadium, with most of them looking forward to the bout in which World Boxing Council (WBC) super-lightweight champion Julio Cesar Chavez (34-2, 18 kos), a Mexican hero, will defend his title against number two ranked contender Greg Haugen (32-4-1, 16 kos) of the United States.

It's another first in boxing history. There has never been that kind of attendance," King shouted in a news conference Thursday.

Pre-fight estimates were that another 400 million boxing fans were expected to watch the fights worldwide on pay-per-view television.

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the largest paid crowd in boxing history was 120,757 at the September 23, 1952, heavyweight title fight in Philadelphia between Gene Tunney and Jack Dempsey. Michael Morley, spokesman for Don King Productions, said more than 100,000 tickets, ranging in price from \$1.80 to \$850, had already been sold for the



Julio Cesar Chavez of Mexico (right) sends Marty Jakubowski of the U.S. down, on his way to capturing the WBC super-lightweight title.

Along with the Chavez-Haugen fight, WBC super-welterweight champion Terry Norris (33-9, 19 kos) will defend his title against International Boxing Federation (IBF) welterweight champion

Maurice Blocker (34-2, 18 kos). Both are from the U.S.

Dan Goosen, promoter for Norris, upped the Ante on the Norris-Blocker fight when he offered \$10 million to the winner of the Chavez-Haugen bout to fight his man.

"We want to prove who is the best fighter in the world, pound-for-pound," he said. If Blocker beats Norris, the same offer would be made for Blocker to fight the Chavez-Haugen winner, Goosen said.

Most of the attention here is on Chavez, whose standing is such that Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari visited him this week at his training site.

Chavez said he is "the best condition of my life" and that he expected to beat Haugen easily. Even though Haugen, a triple world champion, is the underdog, he was talking tough at the news conference.

"I'm in the great condition and I'm done talking. I'm tired of listening to your bull," he told Chavez.

In the pre-fight build-up, Haugen has been hounded by charges that he was prejudiced against Mexicans, but when questioned by a reporter he denied it.

"That's Don and Julio's bull to sell tickets, to put money in their pockets... I haven't disgraced the Mexican people. I mean I'm half-Indian myself," he said angrily.

Mighty Milan lose, but discount result

MADRID (R) — Mighty AC Milan suffered a rare defeat in a friendly soccer match against Athletic Bilbao in Spain, but immediately discounted the result.

Milan, who have stretched their record-breaking unbeaten run in the Italian League to 55 games, crashed 2-0 to Athletic Bilbao. Athletic scored twice in the last five minutes of the friendly, in which the Spanish side used 19 players and Milan had to make do without eight of their top international stars including their Dutch trio and French striker Jean-Pierre Papin.

"We played against 19 different footballers against two teams. This match doesn't count," said Milan manager Fabio Capello, whose side have not been beaten in the league since May 1991.

The Italian champions looked to have held on for a draw with just five minutes left before Athletic midfielder Carlos Garcia slammed a powerful shot into the back of the Milan net from near the edge of the box.

Three minutes later the dejected Italian goalkeeper Sebastiano Rossi made a ghastly error, casually trying to kick away a gentle back-pass from Milan captain Franco Baresi, only to see the ball slip off his boot and serve into the goal.

Athletic's German coach Jupp Heynckes was jubilant after the game. "It's true we played 19 men, but Milan are proud of being the best team in the world. What should it matter to them that a poor team like Athletic puts out all its players?"

Athletic are eighth in the Spanish League.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Navratilova makes winning return to Paris

PARIS (R) — Martina Navratilova played in Paris for the first time for four years, dispatching German Katja Oeljeklaus 6-1 6-3 in the first round of the French Indoor Open. "I'm pretty tired," said the 37-year-old second seed. "It's the first time I have played three successive tournaments in three different continents, Tokyo, Chicago and Paris." Top seed Monica Seles, who beat Navratilova in the Chicago final Sunday, struggled through her second round match against Austrian Judith Wiesner before winning 6-3 6-4. It was her 32nd successive victory.

One out, two left in round-the-world race

PARIS (R) — One of three catamarans trying to sail round the world in 80 days a \$1 million prize dropped out Friday after damaging a float in Antarctic waters. Skipper Olivier de Kersauson radioed that the right float of his hi-tech catamaran Charal was ripped under the water line and he was now sailing slowly towards Cape Town. The ship may have hit a block of ice while sailing among icebergs southwest of the southern tip of Africa in order to skirt the Antarctic towards Cape Horn. Many yachting experts believe the challenge is impossible. The round-the-world yachting record is 109 days.

Treviso, Bologna win home games

MILAN (AP) — Benetton Treviso defeated Olympiakos Athens and Knorr Bologna downed Macca di Tel Aviv in home games of the European Basketball Cup for clubs and stepped closer to qualification for the final round of the tournament. In Treviso, Italian centre Stefano Rusconi pumped in 19 points as he led Benetton, the defending league champion, to a 75-67 victory. His Croatian teammate Toni Kukoc added 15 points, despite an unimpressive performance. Zarko Paspali was the leading scorer on the Greek side, with 29 points. Victory lifted Treviso to second place in the Group B standings, with 20 points and a record of 10-3. Spain's Real Madrid is the group leader with 11-1. Knorr, the current Italian League leader, is now fourth in the Group A standings, with 6-5, two points behind Paok Salonika which leads the group with 7-4.

Oman withdraw from World Cup eliminations

MUSCAT (AP) — The Omani Football Federation has decided to withdraw from the World Cup eliminations, the local press reported Friday. The federation took the decision not to participate in the eliminations scheduled for June at a meeting Thursday led by its chairman, Seoud Ibn Hamad Al Rawahi, the daily Al Watan said. Neither Al Watan nor other published reports gave the reason, which apparently was an assessment of the federation that the national team was not up to standard.

Drunk driver hits cycle racers

OUJULEJOS, Mexico (AP) — A drunk driver plowed into a group of international cyclists competing in the road Mexico '93 race, injuring at least four cyclists, race officials said. There were conflicting reports about the number of injured racers and the extent of their injuries. The 195-kilometre (121-mile) fifth stage from San Luis Potosi to Leon was annulled and race organisers were meeting to determine whether to cancel the entire, 15 day, 2,035 kilometre (1,262-mile) event.

Maradona comeback poses questions for Argentina

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Diego Maradona has posed Argentina's coach Alfio Basile some important questions with his international soccer comeback.

The soccer superstar is sure that donning Argentina's number 10 jersey once again has completed his recovery from a fall into drug abuse and disgrace.

But Basile will no doubt look into why Argentina were often slow in midfield during the 1-1 draw in a friendly against Brazil Thursday — Maradona's 80th appearance for his country but his first since the 1990 World Cup final.

Maradona, given a rapturous welcome back to the national team by a 70,000 capacity crowd at the River Plate Stadium, did not disappoint his massive following.

Using his left boot like a magic wand to create trouble at the back for Brazil with defence-splitting passes and potentially lethal free-kicks, he made up in vision for his lack of speed.

He could well have taken his cue from fans who, following a tradition of improvising chants to fit a particular moment, sang to a samba beat:

"Brazilian, Brazilian, what's that look of dismay, Maradona's Argentine and he's greater than Pele."

Certain doubts, however, have tempered the euphoria of his return with fans wondering whether, after fading in the second half, Maradona will be fit



Diego Maradona

and fast enough for tough World Cup qualifiers and the 1994 finals in the United States.

Argentine substitute striker Alberto Acosta said: "Maradona told me that playing in the national team was the spiritual injection he needed to return to the top. He admitted he lacked the rhythm of top competition."

Commentators remarked that Leo Rodriguez, the Atlanta playmaker who stepped down for Maradona, would have brought

more out of the lightning fast strikers Gabriel Batistuta and Claudio Caniggia.

Tenerife's Fernando Redondo, Argentina's rising star, missed the match through injury and Basile picked three ball-winning type of midfielders to accompany Maradona, reducing the team's creative options.

There was a consensus in the changing rooms that Maradona had acquired himself well.

"Maradona showed he is a master, he did everything right," Basile said.

Brazil's striker Careca said: "Diego is a player from another world. I know what it's like to play alongside him (at Napoli) and I have no doubts he will be of real importance for the functioning of the Argentine national team. With him it will be difficult to end their unbeaten run."

Argentina have not lost in 24 matches over two years.

The Brazilians, who in their previous match beat world champions Germany 3-1 at home, were not pleased with their first half performance.

"Argentina were better in the first half because we played very deep," midfielder Mauro Silva said.

"In the second half we moved up the field and found our way in the match."

Argentina went in front through new cap Alejandro Mancuso in the 18th minute. Monaco's Luiz Henrique equalised 16 minutes after the interval.

Stich, Kratjcek win

STUTTGART (AP) — Marc Rosset wasted two match points on a pair of double faults and was edged by Michael Stich from the German Open Tennis Tournament.

The sixth-seeded Stich prevailed 7-6, 6-7, 7-5 in a bizarre match that saw the two big servers struggle with their own weapons.

Brazil's Kratjcek and Wayne Ferreira also needed three sets to advance to the quarterfinals.

Stich and Rosset traded breaks early in the first set and Stich squandered two set points in the 12th game before winning the tiebreaker 7-2.

Rosset, the Olympic champion from Switzerland ranked 29th by the ATP Tour, broke for a 5-3 lead in the second and served out the set to level the score.

Stich, the 1991 Wimbledon champion, earned two match points on Rosset's serve and converted the second with a backhand volley to win their first career clash.

Kratjcek, who had failed to get past the second round in four tournaments this year, finally cleared that hurdle.

The Dutchman blasted 25 aces to overpower Jakob Hlasek of Switzerland 7-5, 5-7, 6-4 and reach the quarterfinals.

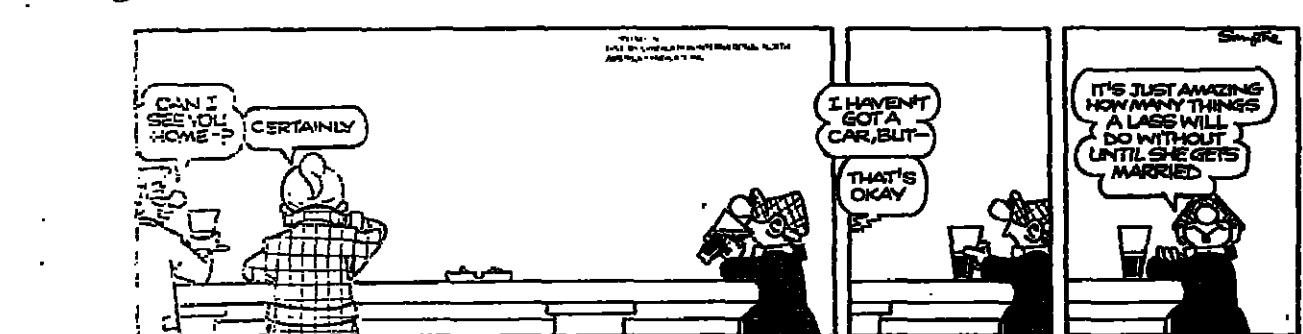
Kratjcek also beat Hlasek last week in the first round of an indoor tournament in Milan, Italy.

Kratjcek's quarterfinal opponent will be Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine. Medvedev advanced without having to play when his rival Magnus Larsson of Sweden pulled out with an upset stomach.

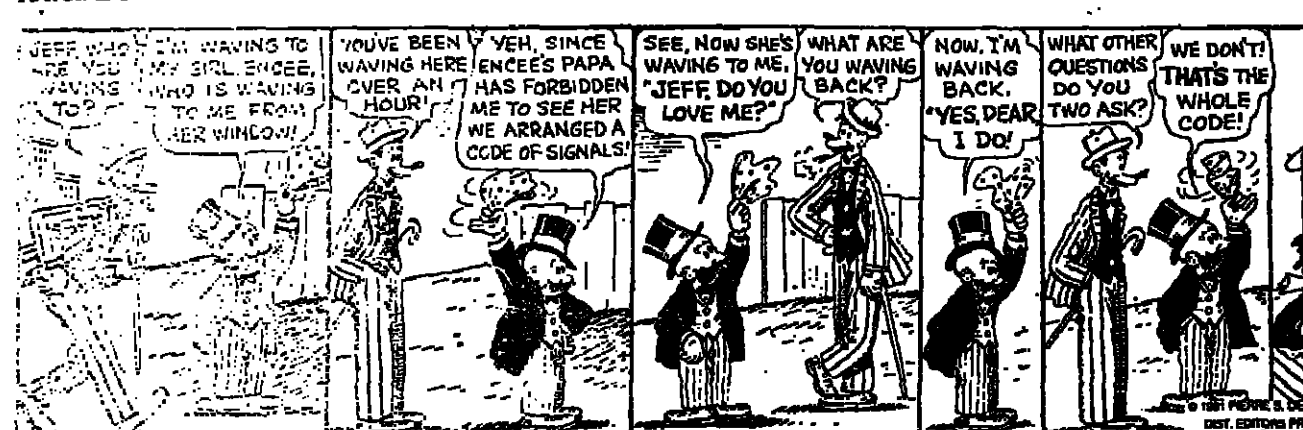
Peasants



Andy Capp



Married Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: If your motivating force issues from a place that supports the common good, you could be spotlighted now. Members with special needs may seem conspicuous.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Your morning to think about good friends and what you can do to aid them and your relationship with them while later you retire and study new ways to progress.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) The outside world brings you ways by which to push forward in routine activities while tonight you find you get desired information by personal delving, probing.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) After breakfast wind up a new outside venture upon which you have bent efforts; then you will be able to put your attention on worldly activities.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You can solve a problem in an unusual manner where your attachment is concerned early but then go personally after what you yourself desire.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Do whatever you have agreed to add a spark of originality to such promises after which you will be able to quietly impress one you love the most.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Put some extra pizzazz in what

ever tasks you have to do as the day starts but later enjoy a friend who is devoted to you although quite emotional.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You see how you can make a dream of accomplishment come true early in the day after which get into specifics, use your aptness at details to make successful.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Consider all aspects of what your mate desires and use most unique methods for obtaining them; then you will be able to put in effect a course highly effective.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) The daytime can be well spent at whatever you are interested that most motivates you and tonight, thoroughly enjoy home pleasures.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) You have an excellent formula now for adding to your present assets so devise a course of action early; tonight get into the mundane aspects.

AQUARIUS: (January 20 to February 19) You have a definite ambition for making an important goal workable so perfect this plan of working out the practical part.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is the day when you see early a way to plan a campaign by which to gain your most original objectives; tonight get the aid of good friends.

THE BETTER HALF

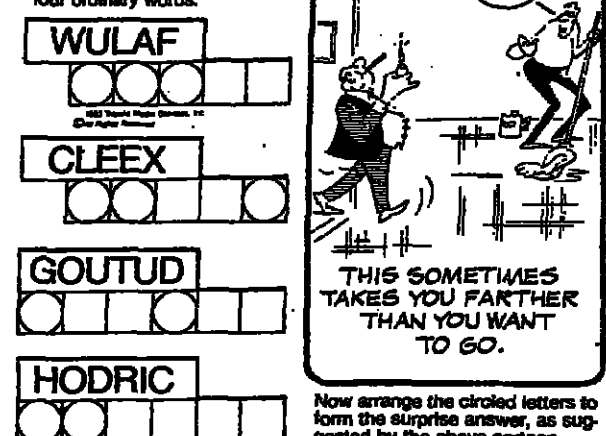
By Glasbergen



"There are many ways to put the sparks back. Try kissing with flint in your mouth."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: HEDGE LOOSE LEAVEN AROUND

Answer: Something every golfer yearns for, but not in his socks—A HOLE IN ONE

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
483 762 985 0AK1093 #7
Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What do you respond?
A.—Your trick-taking ability is too great for a jump to game, which would be presumptuous, but your high-card strength is woefully inadequate for a forcing spade raise in a no-trump game. Since you can't raise hearts with only three-card support, the only option open is a false preference to three spades, and await further developments.

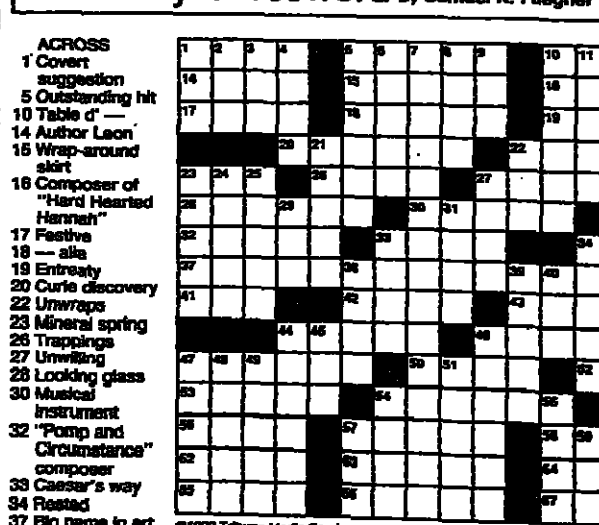
Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
483 762 985 0AK1093 #7
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
3 ♣ Pass 3 ♣ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—Yes, if you bid four spades you risk to make it. However, there are all sorts of hands partner could hold, including a number of minimums, which would yield 12 tricks. We recommend a jump shift to three diamonds, a one-round force by a passed hand, to be followed by four spades.

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
483 762 985 0AK1093 #7
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
3 ♣ Pass 3 ♣ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—An awkward hand, to be sure. You have a poor suit, but your overall strength, with all prime values, is rather potent. You have to tell a white lie about something, and we opt for suit quality. Jump to three spades.

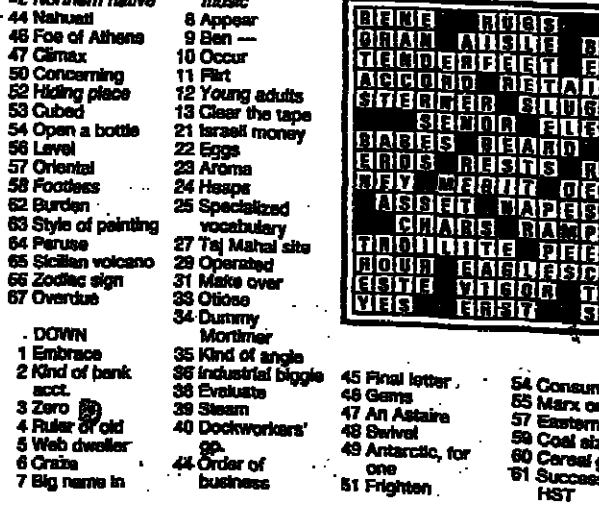
Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
483 762 985 0AK1093 #7
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
3 ♣ Pass 3 ♣ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—Your jump shift committed your side to game, but in which strain? Bid four hearts, just in case partner took a false preference to your first suit with a hand such as the previous example. That will ensure landing in an eight-card fit—if one exists.

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
483 762 985 0AK1093 #7
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
3 ♣ Pass 3 ♣ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—Give this hand to a panel of experts and we're sure they'll come up with several different answers. We feel your best chance for game is in no trump, and, therefore, we would choose to overcall two no trump.

THE Daily Crossword by Samuel K. Flagner



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



كندا

Bahrain offshore banking assets soar

MANAMA (R) — Assets of offshore banking units (OBUs) operating in Bahrain soared in the first nine months of 1992 to \$62.69 billion, up to 21.5 per cent on the same period the previous year despite a drop in the number of operating OBUs.

Figures released Tuesday by the Bahrain Monetary Agency (BMA) showed total assets of OBUs at end-September 1991 stood at \$51.58 billion.

A BMA quarterly bulletin said there were 44 OBUs operation in Bahrain, the Gulf's main financial centre, at end-September 1992, compared with 47 OBUs at end-September 1991. There were 75 units on the island at the start of the 1970s oil boom.

OBUs end-September 1992

assets were \$2.4 billion up on the first half of 1992 of \$60.27 billion. Assets of commercial banks stood at 2.0 billion dinars (\$3.3 billion) at the end of third quarter of 1992, marginally down from 2.05 billion dinars (\$3.4 billion) at end-September 1991.

Private sector's deposits with banks climbed to 1.07 billion dinars (\$2.84 billion) in the first nine months of 1992 compared with 972.3 million dinars (\$2.58 billion) in the same period the previous year.

Total assets of the BMA at end-September 1992 dropped to \$15.6 billion dinars (\$1.37 billion) from \$17.5 billion (\$1.52 billion) at end-September 1991. But were up on the mid-year figure of \$14.8 billion (\$1.32 billion).

Arab bourses could be next for major growth

BAHRAIN (R) — The free-market philosophy sweeping the Arab World has brought the region's stock markets to the threshold of a new boom, a leading Arab economist has said.

Hikmat Nashashibi of the Arab Banking Corporation (ABC), said experienced and alert fund managers were starting to take interest in Arab bourses, although many were still small.

They key to the improved image of the bourses was the decisions by governments to privatise state-controlled enterprises, the cornerstones of the region's economies, he said.

the realisation that it is impossible to accomplish their privatisation goals without fully functioning bourses," he told an economic conference organised by the Bahrain ministry of information and the financial information group Telerate.

"Newly-privatised companies are expected to become the core listings of the emerging stock markets," he added.

Mr. Nashashibi said Arab bourses may still be small "but some global asset managers can think of no region that offers as good promise over the next few years in terms of growth and inflation rates, as well as reasonable valuation by any standard."

London-based Nashashibi said the new philosophy affected wealthy Gulf states and poorer nations like Egypt and Jordan and radical Syria and Algeria.

Mr. Nashashibi estimated that state assets worth about \$70 billion across the Middle East could eventually be privatised, with a large proportion sold in the next year or two.

"Governments have come to

the realisation that it is impossible to accomplish their privatisation goals without fully functioning bourses," he told an economic conference organised by the Bahrain ministry of information and the financial information group Telerate.

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Sears reports \$3.9b '92 loss

CHICAGO (AP) — Sears, Roebuck and Co. has reported a \$1.8 billion loss for the fourth quarter of 1992 and a \$3.9 billion loss for the year, the worst in its history.

The fourth-quarter results included a previously announced \$1.7 billion charge for restructuring the Sears Merchandise Group, which includes the venerable Spars Catalog and closing 113 stores.

Sears also increased by \$300 million its estimate of claims paid by its Allstate Insurance Group for damages caused by hurricane Andrew, bringing the total to \$1.65 billion.

Last year was the most difficult in the company's 106-year-old history, Chairman Edward Brennan said in a statement.

"However, it was a pivotal year as well," he said. "We embarked upon a new corporate strategy that focuses on our core businesses of retail and insurance as we divest some of our financial services units."

He said the previously announced divestment of the Dean Witter brokerage and Coldwell Banker real estate businesses would improve the value of Sears stock and streng-

then the Chicago-based company's balance sheet.

Sears' fourth quarter results also were affected by a \$1.9 billion charge related to the adoption of new methods for accounting for retiree benefits, and a \$206.7 million charge to write down the value of commercial property holdings. All U.S. companies are required to make the accounting change.

Annual results were helped by first quarter gains totalling \$86.6 million from the sale of minority interests in SPG Transaction Services Inc. and Sears Mexico.

Including these one-time items, Sears had a net loss of \$1.6 billion, or \$4.04 per common share, for the last three months of 1992 compared with net income of \$513.1 million, or \$1.48 per share, for the same period a year ago.

Revenues for the fourth quarter rose five per cent to \$16.8 billion from \$16 billion.

For all of 1992, Sears reported a net loss of \$3.9 billion, or \$10.72 a share, compared with net income of \$1.8 billion or \$3.71 per share, in 1991.

Revenues for all of 1992 rose 3.2 per cent to \$59.1 billion from \$57.2 billion.

Clinton takes case for economic proposals to U.S. heartland

CHILLICOTHE, Ohio (Agencies) — President Bill Clinton, taking the case for his economic proposals to the U.S. heartland, urged Americans to take responsibility for their future.

He told them to pressure Congress to enact his programme which included one of the largest tax increases in U.S. history, coupled with deficit reductions and new government spending.

As a fierce partisan battle raged in Washington over his proposals, Mr. Clinton told a rally of several thousand in St. Louis, Missouri, Thursday: "Let us forget about blame and take responsibility for our future."

"Let's do it together. I don't care who gets the credit, I just want us to go forward," he said.

Mr. Clinton arrived early Friday in Chillicothe, a western frontier boom town in the 1800s with a population of 23,000 now. He shook hands with the crowds who turned out to greet him despite biting cold weather.

He planned to lead an economic discussion Saturday with 1,800 townspeople, including students and staff, local Democrats and 260 people picked from a lottery.

Later he heads east to Hyde Park, New York, the hometown of one of his heroes, depression-era president Franklin Roosevelt, where he will promote his plan before returning to Washington the same day.

House Republican leader Bob Michel of Illinois said Mr. Clinton is leading "the biggest propaganda campaign in recent political history."

"The White House is even now becoming one big partisan political megaphone," he said late Wednesday after Mr. Clinton proposed his plan to a joint session of Congress.

"But public relations campaigns are no substitute for sound public policy."

The success of Mr. Clinton's presidency, the first for the Democrats in 12 years, may well hinge on the strength of an economic package that over four years would raise about \$250 billion in new taxes, mostly from the wealthy and corporations, cut spending \$250 billion and implement new spending on job "investment" of about \$140 billion.

Republicans protested that Mr. Clinton was giving a new name to old-fashioned taxing and spending, and that he was a little lean on the cuts part.

Letting his voice lapse into his Arkansas drawl, Mr. Clinton pointed out he was the new man in the big city and he hadn't had time to look everything over yet.

"I know there is more that we can eliminate," he said in St. Louis. "I am honestly looking. I've just been there four weeks and a day, and I'm nowhere near through."

Mr. Clinton told the rally they should demand political reform of Congress that will "limit the influence of special interests."

American labour leaders Friday applauded President Clinton's economic programme as "right in its large purposes and in most of its detail."

"The Clinton plan has the great virtues of stimulating a depressed economy, of putting people back to work and of investing in the nation's future," the executive council of the AFL CIO federation of 33 major labour unions said in a statement at its annual winter meeting.

"It begins the task of restoring a measure of equity to the tax system, by asking those who benefited the most from the tax cuts of the 1980s to bear a more equitable share of the burden of government," the statement said.

The labour bosses said they opposed Mr. Clinton's proposal to freeze the pay of federal government workers.

"An administration that pledged to make government work better should not give the back of its hand to the people who have kept it going during the difficult last decade," the statement said.

Laura Tyson, chairwoman of the Council of Economic Advisers, said the Clinton administration does not anticipate having to ask for more revenues to meet its deficit-cutting goals.

Asked at a press conference whether the Clinton administration might need further tax increases in addition to a package announced Wednesday night to reduce the federal deficit, Ms. Tyson said: "We believe we've set down a package which gives us a big amount of deficit reduction."

"We used fairly conservative growth assumptions. If the economy does better, our revenues will be even higher. We do not anticipate having to ask for more revenues," Ms. Tyson said.

She gave the press conference after speaking with hundreds of students at the University of California at Berkeley outlining President Clinton's new economic plan.

Asked about press reports that new figures issued by the White House showed the deficit reduction would be far lower than Mr. Clinton mentioned a day earlier, Ms. Tyson said it was not a mathematical mistake.

She said the figure of \$493 billion used by Mr. Clinton was a gross deficit reduction number, including spending cuts and revenue increases.

Another lower figure of \$325 billion which had been used was a net figure adjusted for tax incentives and spending programmes which the Clinton administration



Bill Clinton

will also undertake, Ms. Tyson said.

The first public opinion survey taken after Mr. Clinton's speech found strong viewer support for the president's economic proposals. But Senate Republican leader Bob Dole of Kansas said the minority opposition party would not accept the Clinton programme "in its present form."

Mr. Dole called it "very heavy on the tax side and very weak" on spending cuts, echoing a blast of criticism from former president Ronald Reagan.

The new documents show that while Mr. Clinton is proposing spending cuts of \$247 billion over the next four years, 60 per cent of those savings are eaten up by the \$169 billion in increased spending and tax cuts in Mr. Clinton's programme.

Once those deficit widening proposals are taken into account, the \$493 billion in deficit cuts Mr. Clinton proclaimed to have achieved are whittled down to \$325 billion over four years.

Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen led the administration sales campaign on Capitol Hill, telling the Senate Budget Committee: "When the plan is fully operational, 50 per cent of the savings will come from spending cuts and only 42 per cent from revenues. In the years beyond, the proportion of spending cuts remains at least that high."

The key to the strategy is con-

vincing voters to accept additional burdens and live with fewer government benefits for the sake of future generations.

In his first address to Congress, Mr. Clinton outlined his vision of smaller deficits through higher income taxes on the wealthy, increased energy taxes and selected spending cuts, including a one-year freeze on federal pay.

"If we do not act now we will not recognise this country 10 years from now" as the national debt approaches the size of the nation's annual economic output, Mr. Clinton said.

Overall, taxes would rise about \$246 billion and spending would shrink \$253 billion compared with the current policy for the next four years, the White House said.

The programme would impose higher energy taxes, but households with incomes of less than \$30,000 would see them offset by an expansion of the earned income tax credit. The administration calculated the energy tax would raise \$71.4 billion by 1990.

Income tax rates would jump significantly from 31 per cent to 36 per cent — for families with taxable income over \$140,000 and for individuals over \$115,000. Mr. Clinton said that would affect only 1.2 per cent of taxpayers. A 10 per cent surtax that Mr. Clinton had promised to impose on millionaires would be applied to taxable income over \$250,000.

Among Clinton's other proposals:

— Cut 150 specific federal programmes, including a major cut in defence spending which would still leave the United States as the world's strongest military power.

— Freeze the pay of the three million federal workers for a year.

— Raise taxes on social security benefits for retired couples earning more than \$32,000 and individuals earning \$25,000.

— Levy medicare payroll taxes on all earnings, rather than the present \$135,000 limit. Cut payments to doctors and hospitals.

— Boost fees for grazing on federal land and recreation in federal parks.

— Increase the top corporate tax rate, paid by most major companies, to 36 per cent from the current 34 per cent. Deny deductions for lobbying, club dues and executive pay over \$1 million.

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Microsoft seminar
AMMAN — Microsoft, in cooperation with Specialised Technical Services, Amman, Thursday held a seminar at the Plaza Hotel about "Introduction to Programming for Microsoft Windows with Visual Basic."
A number of interested people in computer programming attended this seminar.
A free professional editor copy of Visual Basic was forwarded to each attendee at the end of the seminar.

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Cinema **PHILADELPHIA** Tel.: 634144
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Cinema **PLAZA** Tel.: 699238
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Starring: Michael Douglas and Sharon Stone
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Box office open daily

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One U.S. dollar	1.2588/93	Canadian dollar	1.6350/60
	1.8335/55	Dutch guilders	1.5075/85
	33.61/64	Swiss francs	5.425/75
	1557/1559	Belgian francs	119.38/43
	7.5670/770	French francs	6.9450/550
	6.2700/800	Italian lire	1.4510/20
		Japanese yen	331.05/331.45
One sterling	1.4510/20	Swedish crowns	
One ounce of gold	331.05/331.45	Norwegian crowns	
		Danish crowns	

Bosnian refugees from blockade zone threaten hunger strike

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Muslim refugees from eastern Bosnia who have escaped to the Muslim town of Tuzla are planning a hunger strike in support of starving compatriots they have left behind, Sarajevo Radio said Friday.

Thousands of Muslims in the East are trapped behind a Bosnian Serb blockade which has frustrated U.N. efforts to send food and medicine to starving communities.

The blockade, and a Muslim boycott of U.N. relief in Sarajevo, has provoked the suspension of supplies by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the main aid agency.

Sarajevo Radio said the Bosnian capital was quiet overnight after intensive shelling Thursday. Tension zones in Croatia, where Croats and Serbs resumed fighting last month, were also calm, Zagreb Radio reported.

U.N. relief officials in Sarajevo were set to close down operations Friday as Sadaako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, stood by her decision to suspend operations because the warring parties were playing politics over aid.

In New York, the president of the U.N. Security Council, Moroccan Ambassador Ahmed Soudki, said Secretary-General Boutros Ghali was asking Mrs. Ogata to rescind her decision as soon as possible.

"I had information from the secretary-general this morning," Mr. Soudki said Thursday. "The secretary-general has been writing a letter to her (Mrs. Ogata) to resume very quickly."

The Muslim-led Bosnian gov-

ernment has refused to allow relief aid distributed in Sarajevo until Serbs allow food convoys through to Muslims in eastern Bosnia.

The United States said it was studying a range of options to provide aid, including airdrops. But Pentagon spokesman Bob Hall told reporters Thursday that cargo planes might have to be protected by air power and that "it might not be a feasible option."

The Bosnian government issued a statement late Thursday calling for an urgent meeting of the U.N. Security Council to discuss the situation in the light of the UNHCR decision to halt operations.

According to the head of the UNHCR office in Sarajevo, most of whose population are without water and electricity in freezing temperatures, the agency plans to pull most of its staff out of the Bosnian capital by the weekend.

That schedule so far has not been affected by news that Serbian militiamen had finally allowed a 10-truck U.N. convoy carrying emergency relief to move past a roadblock on the road to the eastern Bosnian city of Gorazde, which is encircled by Serb siege forces.

The convoy, stuck for two days at the roadblock, came to a halt again a few kilometres up the road in front of a hole two metres deep and four by five metres wide. Bulldozers and dumper trucks loaded with gravel were due to plug the hole Friday.

The Security Council was expected to adopt a resolution allowing peacekeepers to bring heavy weapons into Croatia to

defend themselves.

The Council also agreed informally to create an international war crimes tribunal to try persons accused of gross human rights abuses in the former Yugoslavia. That resolution is expected to be adopted next week.

The U.N. refugee agency is looking for a "positive sign" before restarting its relief operations in Bosnia, a spokeswoman said Friday.

The agency was waiting to see if a U.N. relief convoy would reach the encircled eastern Bosnian city of Gorazde, she said. "We are looking for a positive sign," Sylvania Foa, spokeswoman for the UNHCR, told Reuters.

"If the convoy gets through to Gorazde and Sarajevo lifts its hunger strike, we would consider these as positive signs and reassess the situation," she added.

The UNHCR spokeswoman said while aid had been suspended to eastern Bosnia, the humanitarian agency continued to bring assistance to central Bosnia.

"Operations are going on in central Bosnia as normal," she said. In a separate development, Bosnian Serbs who recently took Kamenica from Bosnian government troops Wednesday unearthed 23 bodies from mass graves they said contained victims killed by Muslims.

Many of the bodies were Serb uniform. Others were identified by relatives. And some were decapitated and missing limbs.

But, as in other cases of claimed atrocities in the 11-month-old Bosnian war, it was

impossible to firmly establish which ethnic group was the victim and which the aggressor. It was also unclear whether the bodies were mutilated before or after death.

Journalists taken to the two mass graves near Cerska were told by Serb military officials that a total of 40 bodies out of an estimated 100 missing Serbs would likely be found in the immediate vicinity.

The authorities said that many of the victims were civilians taken from their homes amid a sudden Muslim offensive in November. But they acknowledged that a large number of the those killed were actually Bosnian Serb soldiers.

"They caught many of Serbian soldiers and tortured them before finally killing and placing them in mass graves," said Rajko Andjelic, a Bosnian Serb soldier who participated in unearthing the bodies.

"I am looking for my brother, said Radovan Makunovic, another soldier, who arrived to examine a row of the decaying bodies of Serbian men, some clothed in civilian garments, some in military uniforms and some naked. Some others claimed to have recognised missing relatives.

Many of the bodies showed signs of torture. Their heads were severely smashed. Others were decapitated.

Sporadic artillery fire could be heard from the direction of the Muslim-held village of Cerska, some kilometres from Kamenica, where an estimated 28,000 people are trapped by a Bosnian Serb siege.



A group of local residents retrieve water from the shelling from Serbia militiamen in central city's water system in a trench despite the heavy Sarajevo (AFP photo)

Hundreds die in Haiti ferry accident

PORT-AU-PRINCE (R) — Files of corpses were unloaded from search vessels as officials feared that hundreds died when an ageing ferryboat packed with Haitian peasants and their livestock sank in a storm.

"I don't think anyone will ever know exactly how many people were aboard, or died, in this accident," said Coast Guard Petty Officer Steve Sapp in Miami.

"We're not very optimistic about finding any more survivors at sea."

Five U.S. Coast Guard cutters, a Haitian naval vessel and U.S. aircraft continued their search early Friday for survivors of the ferry Neptune.

Stocked survivors of one of the worst peacetime marine disasters in recent years said they had survived by clinging to flotsam, including the bloated bodies of cows.

Some survivors blamed the disaster on hundreds of passengers who ran to one side of the boat for cover after the Neptune encountered a storm, capsizing the vessel.

Haitian officials said the 150-foot (45-metre) vessel was crammed with between 800 and 2,000 passengers when it capsized during a sudden squall shortly after midnight Tuesday.

In the capital city, ambulances lined up to transfer piles of corpses from docked search vessels to a hospital morgue.

More than 100 bodies were dragged from the ocean by rescue ships, a Coast Guard spokesman in Miami said, and bodies of the dead were seen on the beach.

Aerial searches of bodies drifting in the sea, on and on oil slick.

A spokesman for the Red Cross in Haiti said it was impossible to immediately determine the number of dead because so many bodies were stacked up.

Officials were also unable to immediately pinpoint the number of survivors who swam ashore or were rescued by small fishing boats.

At least 150 survivors were in Petit Goave, a coastal town 80 kilometres from Port-Au-Prince and an unknown number of others were in three southern coastal villages, according to local radio.

One survivor said she and 13 others initially kept themselves afloat in the dark and heaving seas by hanging onto the bloated body of a dead cow, which was also tossed overboard from the ferry. The woman said she later grabbed a floating crate filled with soda bottles and was washed ashore early Thursday morning.

A 33-year-old survivor said he frantically grabbed a bag of charcoal after being swept into the ocean and hugged it to his chest until a small fishing boat rescued him Wednesday afternoon.

"I was saved by this bucket," said one sobbing woman, pointing to a small white plastic bucket at her feet. "I swam for my life."

The ferry serves as an important commercial link between the capital and the agricultural centre of Jeremie, 240 kilometres away. Passengers typically were Haitian peasants taking large baskets of fruit, vegetables and charcoal, as well as chickens, pigs and cattle to sell in the market. The ferries are routinely packed to capacity, with passengers clinging to the upper decks.

U.S. Coast Guard officials, who dispatched vessels and aircraft to search for survivors, said the accident ranked as one of the worst marine accidents in recent history.

Haitian hijacker surrenders in Miami

MIAMI (AP) — A Haitian held a gun to the head of a pilot and hijacked a missionary plane to Florida, giving up his weapon in midflight after being preached to by one of his captives, authorities say.

Woody Marc Edouard, 24, emerged with his hands behind his head and surrendered Thursday at Miami International Airport with 12 others aboard, all believed to be Americans.

Mr. Edouard fired a shot into the cabin at the outset of the hijacking, but no one was hurt, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) said.

He was held on an air piracy charge, which carries at least 20 years in prison.

A spokeswoman at the U.S. embassy in Haiti said the hijacker was a Haitian soldier. But the FBI said it was unable to confirm that.

Mr. Edouard's only known demand was to be flown to Miami, but FBI spokesman Paul Miller said he made no immediate request for asylum.

The FBI said the incident began about 1:30 p.m. (1030 GMT) when Mr. Edouard, armed with a .30-caliber pistol, sneaked up on a woman helping passengers board at Cap Haitien, Haiti, and forced his way onto the plane with her as his hostage.

"He fired a shot. It went through her skin and into the floor of the plane. I don't know if he did it on purpose," said FBI supervisor Roy Tubergen.

The plane, owned by Missionary Flight International of West Palm Beach, had been bound for West Palm Beach with nine passengers and two crew members.

Japan to become world's greyest society

TOKYO (R) — One in five Japanese will be over 65 by 2007, making Japan the world's greyest society, according to a study by the Japan Medical Association (JMA). By the year 2025, the figure would have risen to more than one in four of the population, a JMA spokeswoman said Friday.

The expected jump of over-65s from 12 per cent in 1990 to 20 per cent in just 17 years gave Japan the fastest ageing rate in the world, she added. Japan's projected 27 per cent of over-65s by 2025 compares with 23 per cent for Germany, 20 per cent for the United States and 19 per cent for Britain, United Nations statistics show. Japan's total population would climb to a peak of 128 million in 2007 from the current 123 million and then decline, dropping to 120 million by the year 2025, the JMA study showed.

Copper on the run — or rather run-over

TOKYO (R) — A Japanese motorist who saw a man in dark glasses dash out of a shop clutching a knife did what perhaps a honest citizen should — he ran him over. The "robber", however, turned out to be a plainclothes policeman taking part in a hold-up drill designed to raise local awareness about crime prevention. Local media attending the fake hold-up filmed the knife-wielding policeman rush down the street with a store employee in hot pursuit. The next moment, grounded and dazed, the cop was yelling obscenities at the car that had felled him.

Woman charged with poisoning after lover gets AIDS

PARIS (R) — A French woman infected with the deadly AIDS virus has been charged with poisoning her lover by failing to tell him she was HIV-positive. In a case that could make legal history, an examining magistrate in the northeastern city of Metz charged her Wednesday after her 29-year-old boyfriend filed a complaint alleging she knowingly infected him with the HIV virus during their three-year relationship.

French candidate tells voters the naked truth

PARIS (R) — Would-be French MP Eric Cochard says he's a man with nothing to hide. And to make sure voters get the point he has plastered his constituency with life-size posters of himself — stark naked. Standing for the scandal-hit ruling Socialist Party just south of Paris, the grinning 33-year-old preserves his modesty in the photograph with a tactfully placed signboard saying: "I'm a socialist. I've got nothing to hide."

U.S. senate approves ban on foreigners with AIDS

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate has voted to prevent people infected with the AIDS virus from immigrating to the United States. The 76-23 vote was a defeat for President Bill Clinton.

The ban on admitting foreigners with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) had been a government policy that could be changed by Mr. Clinton. The vote Thursday, if upheld by the House of Representatives and signed by Mr. Clinton, would turn that policy into a law, and any change would require an act of Congress.

White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers said Mr. Clinton was reviewing his options following the vote. "It obviously changes things somewhat, so we'll look at it," she said.

Asked if Mr. Clinton would still push for an executive order lifting the ban, Ms. Myers said, "He could, but the vote margin is fairly dramatic...which suggests an executive order is not a fait accompli. It could still be overturned by a vote of the Senate."

Ms. Myers conceded the White House did little to head off the vote, saying Mr. Clinton has been busy with his economic plan. The most immediate impact would be on 267 Haitian boat people waiting in a U.S. camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Pipeline to Armenia blown up again

MOSCOW (R) — A crucial pipeline supplying gas to land-locked Armenia was blown up in neighbouring Georgia Friday for the third time in four weeks, an Armenian government spokesman said. Vladimir Manoyan said by telephone from Yerevan that the pipe was breached some three kilometres from the Armenian frontier at 2 a.m. The latest blast occurred between the sites of two earlier breaches of the pipeline on Jan. 23 and Feb. 11. Both were repaired after a gap in supplies of several days. No group has claimed responsibility for the attacks. But Armenian officials have blamed Azeris, because of the bloody territorial conflict between the two peoples over Nagorno-Karabakh. The Azeri government has denied any role. Armenia, which is suffering a desperate shortage of fuel, depends on Georgia for its gas. Alternative routes through Azerbaijan were closed because of the five-year-old Karabakh conflict.

6 attempts to kill Yeltsin foiled

MOSCOW (R) — Kremlin bodyguards foiled six plots to kill President Boris Yeltsin during 1992, although none of them came close to him, a Russian newspaper said Friday. Nezavisimaya Gazeta, quoting the head of the bodyguards service, said Tamil separatists had also hatched a plot to kill Mr. Yeltsin as a publicity stunt during his visit to India last month. But Indian and Russian security men thwarted them. Lieutenant-General Mikhail Barsukov told the daily that the simplest case was of a man who had promised to "punish" the president for the crisis afflicting Russia. He was arrested at Yekaterinburg Railway Station in the Urals, but later released. Another was the case of army officer Ivan Kislov, arrested in the attic of a government office last month with vague ideas about killing Mr. Yeltsin with penknife. Gen. Barsukov, head of the main bodyguards department, said individual "avengers" operating separately had little chance of success. Assassins operating in bands were more dangerous.

Bus crash kills 22 in Peru

LIMA (AP) — A bus plunged off a 500 foot cliff side road in the northern Amazon jungle Thursday, killing at least 22 passengers and seriously injuring seven, an official said. Alfonso Paredes, spokesman for the prefect's office in the jungle town of Chachapoyas, 700 kilometres north of Lima, said the bus skidded off the narrow road near the town early Thursday. Mr. Paredes said recent heavy rains had turned the region's unpaved roads into muddy tracks. It was the fourth major accident in Peru this year. Three earlier accidents have left at least 40 people dead.

Witness reports seeing Wallenberg in Russian camp in early 1950s

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — A former Russian gulag inmate has made public a photograph she said showed Raoul Wallenberg in a Soviet detention camp eight years after the Swedish diplomat's reported death.

Natalia Schinkarenko, a survivor of a Gorky Work Camp, showed reporters a photograph she said shows Wallenberg, who is credited with saving up to 20,000 Hungarians from Nazi death camps in a Russian camp in 1953 or 1954.

The photo shows 28 people in traditional Ukrainian costume, some with musical instruments. Ms. Schinkarenko identified a balding man in the middle as Wallenberg.

Ms. Schinkarenko said she was given it some months before she was released from the camp in May, 1956. Gulag authorities first allowed photographs to be taken in the camps in 1953.

Ms. Schinkarenko, a Ukrainian who lives in Kiev, said she didn't come forward with the photo earlier because she was still afraid of Russian authorities after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The order for the arrest of Wallenberg, who would be 80 now, came from Nikolai Bulganin, who later became Soviet premier.

It was dated Jan. 17, 1945, the last day Wallenberg was seen in Budapest, Hungary.

The former Soviet Union always claimed Wallenberg died of a heart attack in a Soviet prison in 1947. But many witnesses have said they saw him in detention much later.

Sonja Sonnenfeld of the Wallenberg Association in Stockholm said it was impossible to confirm the man in Ms. Schinkarenko's snapshot is Wallenberg.

But Simone Lucki, head of Belgium's Raoul Wallenberg Committee, said the photo has been studied by experts, who consider it authentic.

She brought Ms. Schinkarenko here to appear before a European Parliament panel.

Her head and hands trembling as she spoke, Ms. Schinkarenko, 65, recounted richly detailed stories from her years in the Gorkovskaya Camps.

In late September 1955, the women in her camp heard a concert by a troupe of male prisoners visiting from another Gorky Camp, Ms. Schinkarenko said.

"All of a sudden it was said that Raoul Wallenberg was going to play. Nobody knew who this was, and his nationality wasn't explained," said Ms. Schinkarenko who spoke in German.

terribly tall nor small, with grey-black hair," she said.

"He was swollen because of the poor food, and his face was blackened because of frostbite."

"He had a handsome face, beautiful dark eyes and a straight nose and very attractive lips."

She said Wallenberg played hymns and German songs on an accordion.

"It was obvious he had only recently learned. He was always looking at his fingers to see if he was playing right."

"I was told he was a Swede — Raoul Wallenberg from the Swedish embassy," she said.

"They said he came from the north 'some time back,'" Ms. Schinkarenko said she spoke to him briefly in German, but was told he was unwell and needed rest.

She said she never saw him again. Staffan Aberg of the Swedish embassy in Brussels has no opinion on Ms. Schinkarenko's testimony, saying, "we are not excluding anything, but we can't say this is the ultimate truth."

A joint Swedish-Russian Commission is searching Soviet archives to shed light on the Wallenberg case.

Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt said last August Sweden must assume Wallenberg is still alive for lack of conclusive proof of his death.

Yeltsin offers constitutional deal with parliament

MOSCOW (Agencies) — President Boris Yeltsin tried to end a power struggle Thursday by offering to drop his right to introduce laws if parliament stops meddling with his cabinet.

Mr. Yeltsin's dispute with parliament leader Ruslan Khasbulatov over which should be more powerful — the president or the legislature — has blocked Mr. Yeltsin's political and economic reforms.

"We need to preserve the uninterrupted, smooth transition of power to a new generation of politics, which will mean stability for the country," Mr. Yeltsin said.

His detailed proposal resulted from talks Tuesday with Mr. Khasbulatov. If the men agree on the temporary power separation plan, Mr. Yeltsin wants the Russian Congress to convene in a special session to approve it.

The five-part proposal would be something like a temporary constitution until politicians draft a new national charter.

ANC predicts election victory

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The African National Congress predicted Friday it would win a majority in South Africa's first non-racial elections and appealed to the international community for funds to fuel its drive for power.

"What I would like to say... is that the ANC, the national liberation movement of the people of South Africa, will emerge from these elections as the largest political force in the country," ANC Chairman Oliver Tambo told the opening of an international anti-apartheid conference.

Mr. Tambo addressed the delegates from 35 nations on behalf of an exhausted ANC President Nelson Mandela, whom doctors have ordered to rest.

In a glossy brochure handed to the delegates, the ANC said it needed financial help.

"The cost of fighting these elections on a fair and equal basis is far from free and could well exceed 130 million rand (\$43 million). The task is immense," Mr. Mandela wrote.

"Unless the ANC acquires the resources necessary to fund an election campaign of this magnitude, it will not be able to compete on an equal basis. We cannot overstate the need to level the playing field."

The ANC made its election prediction and pitch as the white minority government was winding up three days of delicate talks with the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party to woo it back to the negotiating process.

Government negotiators have been trying to allay Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthe's fears of being sidetracked by secret deals between the ANC and Pretoria on the country's future.

Mr. Mandela defied doctors' orders this week to attend a key session of the ANC's policy-making National Executive Committee (NEC), which agreed to a government of national unity but said it rejected the idea of "power sharing."

"Within the next 12 months and hopefully before the end of this year, the people of South Africa in an historic and watershed election which will mark our break with the past... Mr. Tambo told the conference.

ANC proposals unveiled Thursday envisaged all-race elections within a year and the formation of a government including, on a proportional basis, all parties that win more than five per cent of the vote.

Decisions would be taken by a simple majority, not on a consensus basis that could give the white minority a veto.

"This (consensus) would dilute the concept of majority rule. The ANC is totally against this," ANC Secretary General Cyril Ramphosa said.

Radio Free Europe, broadcasting to Central European countries, and Radio Liberty, to the former Soviet Union, spent about \$207 million in 1992.

Malcolm S. Forbes Jr., the New York financial magazine publisher who chairs the board, said in a telephone interview that the numbers were "from the middle level bureaucrats at the Office of Management and Budget, and not discussed thoroughly by the foreign policy establishment or Capitol Hill."

"In a time of budget austerity, radio broadcasting is the cheapest way of influencing events, the cheapest way to fight dictators, cheaper than military forces and bases," he said.

Forbes predicted that Eastern Europe's problems will force U.S. policy-makers to recognise "the unique mission of the two radios," which is to help former Communist countries' transition to democracy by providing information about their leaders and neighbours.

The source said the Office of Management and Budget listed cuts in the broadcast board's allocations at \$60 million, \$59 million, \$281 million and \$244 million for fiscal years 1994, 1995 and 1997, respectively.

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Ransom demand for Irish champion donkey

CLOUGHMILLS, Northern Ireland (R) — The owner of kidnapped Irish champion donkey Toby has received a ransom demand for £500 (\$720). Retired farmer Jack McKillen, who fears his 10-year-old chestnut star may have been taken by jealous rivals, told reporters Friday "I don't know if the call was genuine or not. He indicated he would ring back with more instructions."

Toby, the winner of 100 donkey races, was stolen from a field in County Antrim. His disappearance coincides with the 10th anniversary of Epsom Derby winner Shergar being kidnapped from the Aga Khan's stud in the Irish Republic by Irish Republican Army guerrillas. The champion racehorse has never been found.

Filthy toilets may spark violence at work

SYDNEY (R) — The next time you use the toilet at work, leave it clean, or you may get more than dirty looks from your colleagues. According to a study by Australian criminologists, the cleanliness of toilets in offices, shops and factories "possesses a direct relevance to aggression control."

"Dirty toilets or a lack of toilets at workplaces, can aggravate people... as people are already stressed as it is," Bruce Swanton, head of the research team at the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC), said Friday. "Dirty seating and surroundings give the impression that clients are not respected, which can depress or offend them."

Japan to become world's greyest society

TOKYO (R) — One in five Japanese will be over 65 by 2007, making Japan the world's greyest society, according to a study by the Japan Medical Association (JMA). By the year 2025, the figure would have risen to more than one in four of the population, a JMA spokeswoman said Friday.

The expected jump of over-65s from 12 per cent in 1990 to 20 per cent in just 17 years gave Japan the fastest ageing rate in the world, she added. Japan's projected 27 per cent of over-65s by 2025 compares with 23 per cent for Germany, 20 per cent for the United States and 19 per cent for Britain, United Nations statistics show. Japan's total population would climb to a peak of 128 million in 2007 from the current 123 million and then decline, dropping to 120 million by the year 2025, the JMA study showed.

Copper on the run — or rather run-over

TOKYO (R) — A Japanese motorist who saw a man in dark glasses dash out of a shop clutching a knife did what perhaps a honest citizen should — he ran him over. The "robber", however, turned out to be a plainclothes policeman taking part in a hold-up drill designed to raise local awareness about crime prevention. Local media attending the fake hold-up filmed the knife-wielding policeman rush down the street with a store employee in hot pursuit. The next moment, grounded and dazed, the cop was yelling obscenities at the car that had felled him.

Woman charged with poisoning after lover gets AIDS

PARIS (R) — A French woman infected with the deadly AIDS virus has been charged with poisoning her lover by failing to tell him she was HIV-positive. In a case that could make legal history, an examining magistrate in the northeastern city of Metz charged her Wednesday after her 29-year-old boyfriend filed a complaint alleging she knowingly infected him with the HIV virus during their three-year relationship.

French candidate tells voters the naked truth

PARIS (R) — Would-be French MP Eric Cochard says he's a man with nothing to hide. And to make sure voters get the point he has plastered his constituency with life-size posters of himself — stark naked. Standing for the scandal-hit ruling Socialist Party just south of Paris, the grinning 33-year-old preserves his modesty in the photograph with a tactfully placed signboard saying: "I'm a socialist. I've got nothing to hide."

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